NATURAL HISTORY

OF

BIRDS, FISH,

INSECTS, AND REPTILES.

EMBELLISHED WITH

UPWARDS OF TWO HUNDRED ENGRAVINGS.

IN FIVE VOLUMES.

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CONTENTS

OF THE

SECOND VOLUME.

	Page
Of the Sparrow Kind - - -	1
The Blackbird - - -	20
—— *Thraſh* - - -	25
—— *Fieldfare, and the Redwing* -	31
—— *Starling* - - -	32
—— *Nightingale* - - -	35
—— *Lark* - - -	45
—— *Woodlark* - - -	53
—— *Titlark* - - -	59
—— *Robin-Redbreaſt* - -	61

Page

The Common Wren - - - 67
—— *Creſted, or Golden Wren* - 69
—— *Red-Start* - - - 71
—— *White Throat* - - 73
—— *Tit-Mouſe* - - - 75
—— *Water Wagtail* - - 79
—— *Stone Chatter* - - 81
—— *Hedge Sparrow* - - 83
—— *Humming Bird* - - 85
—— *Canary Bird* - - - 93
—— *Siſkin* - - - - 133
—— *Chaffinch* - - - 139
—— *Greenfinch* - - - 142
—— *Groſſe-beak, or Hawfinch* - 145
—— *Virginia Nightingale* - - 147
—— *Bull-finch* - - - 149
—— *Gold-finch* - - - 153
—— *Linnet* - - - 159
—— *Red Pole, or Red-headed Linnet* - 163
—— *Twite* - - - 165
—— *Bunting* - - - 166
—— *Wheat-ear* - - - 167
—— *Ortolan* - - - 169
The Swallow - - - 170
—— *Swift* - - - 176
—— *Martin* - - - ibid

Page

The Sand Martin - - - 177
—— *Goat-ſucker* - - - 182
The Sparrow - - - 183
—— *Chineſe Sparrow* - - 187
—— *Bengal Sparrow* - - 188
—— *Cape Sparrow* - - - 190
—— *Mountain Sparoow* - - ibid
—— *Red-head Sparrow* - - 191
The American Mock Bird - - 193
The Pigeon - - - - 197
—— *Ring Dove* - - - 200
—— *Turtle Dove* - - - 201
—— *Dove-houſe Pigeon* - - 203
—— *Carrier* - - - 213
—— *Horſeman* - - - 219
—— *Dutch Cropper* - - - 220
—— *Powting Horſeman* - - 221
—— *Uploper* - - - 226
—— *Pariſian Powter* - - 227
—— *Dragoon* - - - ibid
—— *Tumbler* - - - 228
—— *Bald-pated Tumbler* - - 230
—— *Almond Tumbler* - - 231
—— *Leghorn Runt* - - - 233
—— *Spaniſh Runt* - - - 235
—— *Runt of Frieſland* - - ibid

Page

The Trumpeter - - - 236
—— *Spot* - - - - 237
—— *Laughter* - - - 238
—— *Nun* - - - - ibid
—— *Helmet* - - - - 239
—— *Jacobine* - - - ibid
—— *Turbit* - - - - 242
—— *Owl* - - - - 243
—— *Capuchin* - - - ibid
—— *Finnikin* - - - 244
—— *Broad-tailed Shaker* - - ibid
—— *Barb* - - - - 245
—— *Mahomet* - - - 246
—— *Lace Pigeon* - - - 248
—— *Frill-back* - - - 249
—— *Smiter* - - - ibid
—— *Nincombar Pigeon* - - 250
—— *Chineſe Pigeon* - - - 251
The Land Rail - - - 265
The Attagen - - - 267
Of the Heron, Crane, Stork, and their affinities - - - 269
The Heron - - - 277
The Bittern - - - 289
The Crane - - - 293
The Stork - - - 305

Page

The Ibis - - - - 308
—— *Black-faced Ibis* - - 309
The Black Stork - - - 310
Of the Balearic and other Cranes - 311
The Gigantic Crane - - - 313
The Jabiru - - - 315
The Anhima - - - ibid
The Demoiſelle - - - 316
The Spoonbill - - - 318
The Flamingo - - - 321

Directions for placing the Plates in the

SECOND VOLUME.

Page 1	Fig. 37, 38, 39, 40.
41	Fig. 41, 42, 43, 44.
67	Fig. 45, 46, 47, 48.
93	Fig. 49, 50, 51, 52.
149	Fig. 53, 54, 55, 56.
170	Fig. 57, 58, 59, 60.
201	Fig. 61, 62, 63, 64.
228	Fig. 65, 66, 67.
279	Fig. 69, 70.
316	Fig. 71, 72.

NATURAL HISTORY

OF

BIRDS, FISH, REPTILES, &c.

OF THE SPARROW KIND.

UNDER which denomination all naturaliſts have concurred in claſſing that race of birds from which man derives ſo much pleaſure by the delightful harmony of their little throats; they ſeem formed for his entertainment, and, as if conſcious thereof, they always reſide in the vicinity of his ſociety. It is very true, indeed, that independent of any attachment to man, two very eſſential reaſons may be aſſigned for their preferring his neighbourhood to the ſtill gloom of the foreſts, and cultivated grounds to dreary plains; namely, the ſupply of food and ſecurity from their enemies, This tribe of

birds conſiſts of the ſmalleſt order of the feathered race, in which the black-bird may claim the foremoſt rank in point of ſize, and from him they gradually deſcend to the humming bird, which from the minuteneſs of its ſize, ſeems to unite this part of animated nature with inſects, in the ſame manner as the oſtrich does with quadrupeds. Thus weak from ſize, and defenceleſs by nature, the little ſongſters dread reſiding in the foreſts where the ravenous tribes live in ſullen ſecurity, and prowl about for prey; they fly from thoſe, their moſt mercileſs perſecutors, and take refuge at no great diſtance from the habitations of men, whither they feel a preſentiment their foes never venture to approach but by ſtealth; beſides this, the principal of their food conſiſts of grain, fruits, and particularly inſects; the two former are not to be procured in uninhabited deſerts, and the latter are always found in greateſt abundance in cultivated grounds.

The generality of birds, although ſo well formed by nature for changing place with rapidity and eaſe, are for the moſt part contented with the places where they were bred, and by no means found exerting their deſire in proportion to their endowments. The rook, if undiſturbed,

diſturbed, will never forſake its native wood; the blackbird conſtantly adheres to its accuſtomed hedge, and if ever they change, it is only from motives of famine or fear. The redbreaſt, or the wren, ſeldom leaves the field where it has been brought up, or where its young have been excluded; even though hunted, it flies along the hedge, and ſeems fond of the place with an imprudent perſeverance. The fact is, all theſe ſmall birds mark out a territory to themſelves, which they will permit none of their own ſpecies to remain in; they guard their dominions with the moſt watchful jealouſy; and we ſeldom find two males of the ſame ſpecies in the ſame hedge together. There are ſome ſorts, however, called Birds of Paſſage, which remove to warmer or colder climates, as the air, or their peculiar conſtitutions, render it neceſſary. Of this migration, and the concomitant circumſtances, a modern author has given the following curious particulars:

"There are," ſays he, "ſeveral perſons "who get a livelihood by watching the ſeaſons "when our ſmall birds begin to migrate from "one country to another, and by taking them "with nets in their paſſage. The birds are "found to *fly*, as the bird-catchers term it,

"chiefly

" chiefly during the month of October,
" and part of September and November.
" There is alſo another flight in March, which
" is much leſs conſiderable than that in au-
" tumn. Nor is it leſs remarkable, that ſeveral
" of theſe ſpecies of flight-birds make their ap-
" pearance in regular ſucceſſion. The pippet,
" for inſtance, begins its flight every year about
" Michaelmas, when they are caught in great
" numbers. To this the wood-lark ſucceeds,
" and continues its flight till towards the mid-
" dle of October; other birds follow, but are
" not ſo punctually periodical; the green-finch
" does not begin till the froſt obliges it to ſeek
" for a change. Theſe birds, during thoſe
" months, fly from day-break till twelve at
" noon; and there is afterwards a ſmall flight
" from two till night. Such are the ſeaſons
" of the migration of the birds, which have
" been uſually conſidered as ſtationary, and on
" theſe occaſions they are caught in great abun-
" dance, as they are on their journey. But
" the ſame arts uſed to allure them upon other
" occaſions would be utterly fruitleſs, as they
" avoid the nets with the moſt prudent circum-
" ſpection. The autumnal flight probably con-
" ſiſts of the parents conducting their new-
" fledged

" fledged young to thoſe places where there is
" ſufficient proviſion, and a proper tempera-
" ment of the air during the winter ſeaſon;
" and their return in ſpring is obviouſly from
" an attachment to the place which was found
" ſo convenient before for the purpoſe of neſt-
" ling and incubation.

" Autumn is the principal ſeaſon when the
" bird-catcher employs his art to catch theſe
" wanderers. His nets are a moſt ingenious
" piece of mechaniſm, being generally twelve
" yards and a half long, and two yards and a
" half wide, and ſo contrived as to form a flat
" poſition to riſe on each ſide, and clap over the
" birds that are decoyed to come between them.
" The birds in their paſſage are always obſerved
" to fly againſt the wind; for example, if it is
" weſterly, the bird-catcher who lays his nets
" moſt to the eaſt is ſure of the moſt plentiful
" ſport, if his call-birds are good. For this
" purpoſe, he generally carries five or ſix lin-
" nets, two gold-finches, two green-finches,
" one wood-lark, one red-poll, and perhaps a
" bull-finch, a yellow hammer, a tit-lark, and
" an aberdavine: theſe are placed at ſmall diſ-
" tances from the nets in little cages. He has
" beſides what he calls his *flur-birds*, which are

" placed upon a moveable perch, which the " bird-catcher can raiſe at pleaſure by means " of a ſtring; and theſe he always lifts gently " up and down as the wild bird approaches. " But this is not enough to allure the wild bird " down; it muſt be called by one of the call- " birds in the cages; and theſe, by being made " to moult prematurely, by being kept in a " warm place, call louder and better than thoſe " that are wild and at freedom. There even " appears a malicious joy in theſe call-birds to " bring the wild ones into the ſame ſtate of " captivity, while at the ſame time their call is " louder, and their plumage brighter, than in a " ſtate of nature. Nor is their ſight or hear- " ing leſs exquiſite, far exceeding that of the " bird-catcher; for the inſtant the wild birds " are perceived, notice is given by one to the " reſt of the call-birds, who all unite in the " ſame tumultuous ecſtacy of pleaſure. The " call-birds do not ſing upon thoſe occaſions " as a bird does in a chamber, but incite the " wild ones by ſhort jerks, which, when the " birds are good, may be heard at a great diſ- " tance. The allurement of this call is ſo " great, that the wild birds hearing it are ſtop- " ped in their moſt rapid flight; and, if not

" already

" already acquainted with the nets, light boldly
" within twenty yards perhaps of the bird-
" catcher, and on a ſpot which they would
" otherwiſe have quite diſregarded. This is
" the opportunity wiſhed for, and the bird-
" catcher pulling a ſtring, the nets on each
" ſide riſe in an inſtant, and clap directly down
" on the poor unſuſpecting viſitants. Nay, it
" frequently happens, that if half a flock only
" are caught, the remaining half will imme-
" diately afterwards light between the nets,
" and ſhare the fate of their companions.
" Should only one bird eſcape, this unhappy
" ſurvivor will alſo venture into danger till it
" is caught; ſuch a faſcinating power have the
" call-birds.

" Indeed it is not eaſy to account for the
" nature of this call, whether it be a challenge
" to combat, an invitation to food, or a pre-
" lude to courtſhip. As the call-birds are all
" males, and as the wild birds that attend to
" their voice are moſt frequently males alſo, it
" does not ſeem that love can have any in-
" fluence in their aſſiduity. Perhaps the wild
" females, in thoſe flights, attend to and obey
" the call below, and their male companions
" of the flight come down to bear them com-

" pany. If this be the caſe, and that the fe-
" males have unfaithfully led their mates into
" the nets, they are the firſt that are puniſhed
" for their infidelity; the males are only made
" captives for ſinging; while the females are
" indiſcriminately killed, and ſold to be ſerved
" up to the tables of the delicate.

" Whatever be the motives that thus arreſt
" a flock of birds in their flight, whether
" they be of gallantry or of war, it is certain
" that the ſmall birds are equally remarkable
" for both. It is, perhaps, the genial deſire
" that inſpires the courage of moſt animals;
" and that being greateſt in the males, gives
" them a greater degree of valour than the fe-
" males. Small birds being extremely amo-
" rous, are remarkably brave. However con-
" temptible theſe little warriors are to larger
" creatures, they are often but too formidable
" to each other; and ſometimes fight till one
" of them yields up his life with the victory.
" But their contentions are ſometimes of a
" gentler nature. Two male birds ſhall ſtrive
" in ſong, till, after a long ſtruggle, the
" loudeſt ſhall entirely ſilence the other.
" During theſe contentions, the female ſits an
" attentive ſilent auditor, and often rewards the
" loudeſt

" loudeſt ſongſter with her company during the " ſeaſon."

Much has been written upon this ſubject of migration, without any author being able to ſubſtantiate any fact, beyond, that in general, as the winter ſeaſon approaches, every bird reſorts to thoſe places where its food is to be found in the greateſt plenty; and that they always return at the ſeaſons of incubation to thoſe parts, where their young, when hatched, have the greateſt chance of not only being ſupplied with the moſt congenial food to their conſtitutions, but alſo in the greateſt abundance.

But to keep to that race which entertain man with their melody; we find the faculty of ſinging, with a very few exceptions, is confined to the male, while the principal fatigues attendant upon generation fall to the lot of the female, for ſhe has the taſk of ſitting almoſt continually during the time of incubation, and almoſt the whole care of nurſing her neſtlings until they are capable of providing for themſelves. It is true, indeed, that the male will aſſiſt during this period, with providing proviſions, not only for her while ſitting, but afwards for their offspring, and endeavour to alleviate

alleviate her fatigue by the ſpirited exertions of that ſong with which nature has endowed him. This melody ſerves at firſt as a note of blandiſhment to attract her affections; it ſerves as a note to delight her during the time of her incubation; but it ſerves ſtill farther as a note of ſecurity, to aſſure her that no danger threatens to moleſt her. The male, while his mate is hatching, ſits upon ſome neighbouring tree, continuing at once to watch and to ſing, and while his voice is heard, the female reſts in confident ſecurity; but if there is the ſmalleſt appearance of danger, he ſtops all of a ſudden; and this is a moſt certain ſignal for his mate to be on her guard againſt an approaching enemy. Theſe little ſongſters, who chiefly live by commiting their depredations on corn and fruits, as though conſcious that man conſiders them as unwelcome intruders upon the fruits of his labours, in making their neſts uſe every art they are capable of to conceal them from his ſight. In the office of making their neſts they are both employed, the female being the principal architect, while the male chiefly employs himſelf in furniſhing materials; theſe materials, in the firſt inſtance, moſtly conſiſt of ſmall twigs, which they contrive to twiſt round

round by way of a foundation, filling up the crevices with clay; the inſides are, however, compoſed of more warm and ſoft materials, as hair, wool, &c. and which is abſolutely neceſſary to give that warmth to their eggs which the ſmallneſs of their bodies might not be enabled to beſtow for the purpoſes of generation.

In the choice of a place for their neſt nothing can exceed the cunning which the little owners employ to conceal it. If it is built in buſhes, the pliant branches are ſo diſpoſed as to hide it entirely from the view; if it be built among moſs, nothing outwardly appears to ſhew that there is an habitation within. It is always built near thoſe places where food is found in greateſt abundance; and being completed they are cautious of not betraying the ſpot, taking care never to go in or out while there is any one in ſight. During the time of incubation theſe little birds are extremely aſſiduous, and the neſt is always occupied by the one or the other; the male always ſitting thereon when the female is obliged to yield to the calls of nature.

The firſt food of all birds of the ſparrow kind is worms and inſects. Even the ſparrow and

and the gold-finch, that when adult feed only upon grain, have both been fed upon inſects while in the neſt. The young ones, for ſome time after their excluſion from the ſhell, require no food; but the parent ſoon finds by their chirping and gaping that they begin to feel the approaches of hunger, and upon which ſhe quits them to ſeek a ſupply. In her abſence they continue to lie cloſe together, and cheriſh each other by their mutual warmth, and during this interval they preſerve a perfect ſilence, uttering not the ſlighteſt note till the parent returns. Her arrival is always announced by a chirrup, which they perfectly underſtand, and which they anſwer all together, each petitioning for its portion. The parent diſtributes a ſupply to each by turns, and the wren will, in this manner, feed ſeventeen or eighteen young ones, without paſſing over one of them.

When they are full fledged, and fitted for ſhort flights, the old ones, taking the opportunity of fair weather, lead them a few yards from the neſt, and then compel them to return. For two or three ſucceeding days they are led out in this manner, but each day to greater diſtances; and no ſooner do the old birds find they

they are ſufficiently ſtrong for flight, and enabled to provide for themſelves, than the parents forſake them for ever, and pay them no more attention than they do to other birds in the ſame flock; nay, if the young ones perſiſt in following, they will ſometimes uſe rough means to drive them away.

Under this deſcription of birds there are a great variety who ſtrongly reſemble each other, not only in their form and plumage, but alſo in their appetites and manner of living. The gold-finch, the linnet, and the yellow-hammer, lead a very ſimilar life, being an active, lively, ſalacious tribe, that ſubſiſt in theneighbourhood, and upon the labours of mankind. Their neſts bear a ſimilitude, and they are all about the ſame time in hatching their young, which is uſually fifteen days; but notwithſtanding all theſe ſimilarities they are moſt unqueſtionably different ſpecies. To account for theſe variations has given riſe to many ſpeculative ſuppoſitions among naturaliſts, ſome equally as vague as uncertain; the moſt general concluſion has been, that they originate from the inconſtancy of the individuals to their own ſpecies. It has been obſerved that a linnet and a lark, a goldfinch and a canary bird, will

breed together in a cage, and therefore it has been conjectured, that in the pairing ſeaſon an union of this kind not unoften takes place; that from ſuch an union an offſpring is produced, that in fact neither reſembles father nor mother; and as this offſpring is equally capable of generation, they have concluded there is no difficulty in accounting for that multiplicity of varieties we daily ſee among thoſe ſmall birds, and who frequently differ only by ſome ſlight ſhades in particular feathers, but which difference has been thought ſufficient for ſome nomenclators to enter upon the taſk of inventing their names.

Willoughby, however, has divided all the ſmaller birds into thoſe that have ſlender bills, and thoſe that have ſhort and thick bills. Thoſe with ſlender bills chiefly live upon inſects; thoſe with ſhort, ſtrong bills, live moſtly upon fruits and grain. Among ſlender billed birds, he enumerates the thruſh, the blackbird, the fieldfare, the ſtarling, the lark, the titmouſe, the water-wagtail, the nightingale, the red-ſtart, the robin-redbreaſt, the beccafigo, the ſtone-chatterer, the whinchat, the white-throat, the hedge-ſparrow, the pettichaps, the golden-crowned wren, the wren, humming bird, and

ſeveral

ſeveral other ſmall birds of the ſparrow kind. All theſe live chiefly upon inſects, and are conſequently of particular benefit to man, as they aſſiſt in clearing his grounds of the ſwarms of pernicious vermin that devour the budding leaves and flowers, and that even attack the root itſelf before ever the vegetable can come to maturity. They alſo ſeek for and deſtroy the eggs of thoſe inſects which would otherwiſe propagate in numbers beyond the art of man to extirpate; and thus at once ſatisfy their own appetites and render him the moſt eſſential ſervices. Beſides which, this tribe includes the ſweeteſt ſongſters of the grove; namely, the nightingale, the thruſh, the blackbird, the lark, the red-breaſt, the black-cap, and the wren.

Among the thick and ſhort bills he reckons the groſsbeak, the greenfinch, the bullfinch, the croſsbill, the houſe-ſparrow, the chaffinch, the brambling, the goldfinch, the linnet, the ſiſkin, the bunting, the yellow-hammer, the ortolan, the wheat-ear, and ſeveral other foreign birds, of which we know rather the names than the hiſtory. Theſe chiefly feed upon fruits, grain, and corn. They are often troubleſome to man, as they are a numerous tribe, the harveſt often ſuffers from their de-

predations: they are ſo exceedingly bold, that when they are driven off from one end of the field, they will fly round and come in at the other. "But theſe all," ſays Goldſmith, "have "their uſes; they are frequently the diſtributors "of ſeeds into different diſtricts; thoſe grains "which they ſwallow are ſometimes not wholly "digeſted; and theſe, laid upon a ſoil con-"genial to them, embelliſh the face of Na-"ture with that agreeable variety which art "but vainly attempts to imitate. The miſle-"toe-plant, which we often ſee growing on "the tops of elm and other trees, has been "thought to be propagated in this manner; "yet, as it is often ſeen growing on the under "ſide of the branch, and ſometimes on a per-"pendicular ſhoot, it ſeems extraordinary how "a ſeed could be depoſited in that ſituation. "However this be, there are many plants pro-"pagated from the depoſitions of birds; and "ſome ſeeds are thought to thrive the better, "for firſt having undergone a kind of macera-"tion in the ſtomach of the little animal be-"fore it is voided on the ground."

The ſongſters poſſeſſed of the ſtrongeſt and loudeſt pipe, are the canary bird, the linnet, the chaffinch, the goldfinch, the greenfinch, the

the bullfinch, the brambling, the ſiſkin, and the yellow-hammer. The note of theſe is not ſo generally pleaſing as that of the ſoft billed birds but it uſually holds longer; and, in a cage, theſe birds are more eaſily fed, and hardy.

Some of theſe little ſongſters are alſo called *birds of paſſage*. The fieldfare, and the redwing breed, paſs their ſummers in Norway, and other cold countries, and are tempted hither to our mild winters, and to thoſe various berries which then abound with us, and make their principal food. The hawfinch and the croſsbill are uncertain viſitants, and have no ſtated times of migration. Swallows of every ſpecies diſappear at the approach of winter. The nightingale, the black-cap, the fly-catcher, the willow-wren, the wheat-ear, the whin-chat, and the ſtone-chatter, leave us long before the approach of winter; while the ſiſkin and the linnet only forſake us when our winters are more than uſually ſevere. Not any of the others abſolutely quit the kingdom; although ſome of them go at certain periods from one part of it to another.

Many of thoſe kinds, however, which are birds of paſſage in England, are ſeen conſtantly in others parts, and make one country their fixed

reſidence

reſidence the whole year; while the others, who are conſtant reſidents with us, emigrate in other countries; for inſtance, the ſwallow, that with us is particularly remarked for being a bird of paſſage, in Upper Egypt, and in the iſland of Java, breeds and continues the whole year, without ever diſappearing. Larks, that remain with us the year throughout, are birds of paſſage in Sweden, and forſake that climate in winter, to return again with the returning ſpring. The chaffinch, that with us is ſtationary, appears during the winter in Carolina and Virginia; but diſappears totally in ſummer, to breed in the more northern regions. In Sweden alſo, theſe little birds are ſeen returning, at the approach of Spring, from the warmer climates, to propagate; which being accompliſhed by the latter end of autumn, the males and females ſeparate; the males to continue among their native ſnows, the females to ſeek a warmer and gentler winter. On this occaſion, they are ſeen in flocks, that almoſt darken the air, without a ſingle male among them, making their way into the more ſouthern regions of Denmark, Germany, and Holland. In this amazon-like retreat, thouſands fall by the way; ſome by fatigue, ſome by want; but

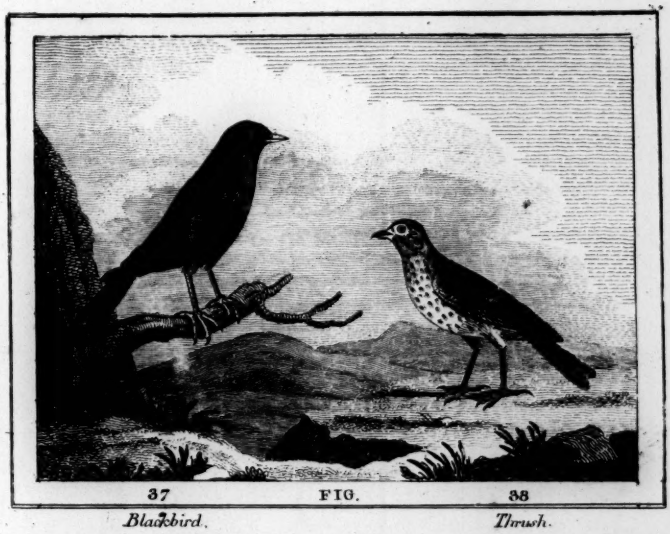
the greateſt number by the nets of the fowler; the taking them being one of the chief amuſements among the gentry where they paſs. In ſhort, the change of country with all this little tribe, is rather a pilgrimage than a journey; a migration rather of neceſſity than of choice.

The blackbird, thruſh, ſtarling, redwing, fieldfare, ring-ouzel, and the water ouzel, are the largeſt of the ſparrow kind, and may be diſtinguiſhed from all others of this claſs, as well by their ſize as by their bills, which are a little bending at the point; a ſmall notch near the end of the upper chap, and the outmoſt toe adhering as far as the firſt joint of the middle toe. Having ſpoken of theſe ſongſters generally, we ſhall enter a little into the particulars relative to the principal individuals among them.

THE BLACKBIRD

IS a bird well known in moſt, if not all the counties in England. He is the largeſt ſong-bird found in the kingdom; and likewiſe one of the firſt that proclaims the welcome ſpring, by his ſhrill harmonious voice, as if he were the harbinger of Nature, to awaken the reſt of the feathered tribe to prepare for the approaching ſeaſon; and by the ſweet modulation of his tuneful accents, endeavours to delight the hen and allure her to the office of incubation, even before there are leaves on the trees, and whilſt the froſts are in the fields; building their neſt the ſooneſt of any bird; having young ones commonly by the 25th of March, and ſometimes by the middle of that month.

The cock, when kept in a cage, whiſtles and ſings all the ſpring and ſummer time, at leaſt four or five months in the year; is a ſtout



37 FIG. 38

Blackbird. *Thrush.*

39 FIG. 40

Sky Lark. *Knightingale.*

BRITISH
20 MA 69
MUSEUM

ſtout hardy bird; and beſides his pleaſant natural note, may be taught to whiſtle almoſt any tune.

When wild in the fields, they feed promiſcuouſly upon berries and inſects: it is a ſolitary bird, that, for the moſt part, flies ſingly.

The ſexes are not eaſily known by their colour while young, but the blackeſt bird generally proves a cock: the bill of an old cock-bird is of a deep yellow; in the hen the tip and upper part is black; the mouth, in both, is yellow within: the hen, and young cock-birds are rather brown, or of a dark ruſſet, than black, and their bellies of an aſh-colour; but after the cock has changed his chicken feathers, he becomes coal-black.

This bird breeds very ſoon in the year, and has young ones by the end of March, or ſooner: they build their neſts very artificially: the outſide of moſs, ſlender twigs, bents, and fibres of roots, all very ſtrongly cemented and joined together with clay; plaiſtering the inſide alſo, and lining it with a covering of ſmall ſtraws, bents, hair, or other ſoft matter; upon which the hen lays four or five eggs, ſeldom more, of a bluiſh green colour, full of duſky ſpots. They build pretty open; generally in a hedge,

near the ground, and before there are many leaves upon the buſhes; which ſo expoſes their neſt, conſidering the largeneſs of it, that it may be eaſily diſcovered.

Theſe birds in general meaſure from the tip of the bill to the end of the tail, eleven inches, of which the bill is one inch, and the tail four inches long.

The black-bird has either four or five young ones at a breeding, hardly ever more or leſs; and if taken from the neſt, may be raiſed with little trouble, taking care to keep them clean, and feeding them with ſheep's heart, or other lean meat, this is not ſalted, cut very ſmall, and mixed with a little bread. When grown up, they may be fed with any ſort of fleſh meat, raw or dreſſed, provided it be not ſalt; it will be rather better food for them, if mixed with a little bread.

He is a ſtout healthful bird, not very ſubject to diſorders; but if ſick, or drooping, at any time, an houſe-ſpider or two will help him; and a little cochineal in his water will do him much good. They love to waſh and prune their feathers; therefore when fully grown, they ſhould have water ſet in their cages for that purpoſe.

Black-

Blackbirds are always brought up from the neſt, the old ones not being to be tamed, and when taken care of, ſeldom fail to repay the trouble with a delightful ſong.

The Blue-bird, however, deſcribed by Bellonius, is in every reſpect far ſuperior. "This "beautiful animal entirely reſembles a black-"bird in all but its blue colour. It lives in the "higheſt part of the Alps, and even there "chuſes the moſt craggy rocks and the moſt "frightful precipices for its reſidence. As it "is rarely caught, it is in high eſtimation even "in the countries where it breeds, but ſtill "more valuable when carried from home. It "not only whiſtles in the moſt delightful man-"ner, but ſpeaks with an articulate diſtinct "voice. It is ſo docile, and obſerves all things "with ſuch diligence, that though waked at "midnight by any of the family, it will ſpeak "and whiſtle at the word of command. Its "colour about the beginning of winter, from "blue becomes black, which changes to its "original hue on the firſt approaches of ſpring. "It makes its neſt in deep holes, in very high "and inacceſſible ſolitudes, and removes it not "only from the acceſſes of man, but alſo hides "it with ſurpriſing cunning from the ſhammoy,

" and other wild beaſts that might annoy its " young.

" The manner of taking this beautiful bird " is ſaid to be this. The fowlers having found " out the place where it builds, take with " them a ſtrong ſtilt or ſtake, ſuch as the " climbers of rocks make uſe of to aſſiſt them " in their aſcent. With the aſſiſtance of this, " they mount where an indifferent ſpectator " would think it impoſſible to aſcend, cover- " ing their heads at the ſame time to ward off " any danger of the falling of pebbles or ſtones " from above. At length, with extreme toil " and danger, having arrived at the neſt, they " draw it up from the hole in which it is uſu- " ally buried, and cheriſh the young with an " aſſiduity, equal to the pains they took to ob- " tain them. It produces for the moſt part " five young, and never more; it ſeldom de- " ſcends into the plain country; flies ſwifter " than a blackbird, and uſes the ſame food.

THE THRUSH.

THE common Song-Thruſh is ſomewhat leſs than the blackbird: the upper ſurface of the body is of an olive colour, with a mixture of yellow in the wings; the breaſt yellowiſh, ſpotted with duſky ſpots, and the belly white.

There are three or four other ſorts of thruſhes found in England; as, firſt, the great thruſh, called the miſſel-bird, meaſle-taw or ſhrite, which in the colour of the breaſt and belly agrees with the ſong-thruſh, but is a bigger bird: he is very beautiful to look at, but not valued for ſinging, therefore ſeldom kept in a cage.

The ſecond ſort, called the red-wing, ſwine-pipe, or wind-thruſh, is in ſhape and colour ſo like the ſong-thruſh, that they are hard to be diſtinguiſhed, only the latter hath more and greater

greater ſpots on the breaſt and belly, and is ſomewhat bigger: this kind is in no eſteem for ſinging. It is a bird of paſſage, that ſhifts places according to the ſeaſon of the year; but whither it goes, is not to us perfectly known.

The third ſort is called the ſmall heath-thruſh, from its building upon heaths and commons; he is of a darker colour than any other of the thruſh kind, and by ſome valued for ſinging; but as none of the ſorts are comparable to the common ſong-thruſh, nor ſo well known, I ſhall treat of the ſong-thruſh only; which is a curious bird, as well for the great variety of his notes, as his long continuance in ſong, which is, at leaſt, nine months in the year. In the beginning of the ſpring, he ſits on high trees, and ſings moſt ſweetly, and is as delightful a bird as a perſon can deſire to keep in a cage; ſome of them, when they have been brought up from the neſt, have learnt the wood-lark's, nightingale's, and other curious birds' ſongs.

The cock and hen of this kind are ſo much alike in the colour of their feathers, and ſhape of their bodies, that, notwithſtanding the moſt careful examination, not any certain marks have been

been diſcovered to know the one from the other, excepting that when in full feather, the duſky, or olive colour on the cock's back, is ſomewhat darker than the back of the hen; he has alſo a more gloſſy caſt; the ſpots on his breaſt and belly ſeem darker, and rather more white appears on his belly.

It is obſerveable, that in the cocks and hens of all kinds of birds, where the colours are the ſame in both, yet the cock-bird conſtantly excels the hen in the reſplendency of his feathers; in the Song-Thruſh, in an old bird, this difference is apparent.

In young thruſhes it is beſt to chuſe the ſleekeſt and brighteſt bird; when they begin to feed themſelves, both cocks and hens will record; the cock will get upon his perch and ſing his notes low for ſome time; the hen will attempt to ſing, but do it only by jerks, and ſo diſappoint expectation. At the latter end of the ſummer, when their moulting is over, the cock will break out ſtrong in ſong, and ſing in winter as well as ſummer.

This bird breeds very early in the ſpring, nearly as ſoon as the blackbird; they commonly have young ones by the end of March,

or

or beginning of April. Mr. Albin ſays, that he ſaw a neſt of young thruſhes on the 5th or 6th of April, notwithſtanding it had been a cold ſpring, which were well feathered, and at leaſt twelve days old.

The thruſh builds in woods or orchards, and ſometimes in a thick hedge, near the ground. The outſide of the neſt conſiſts of fine ſoft green moſs, interwoven with dead graſs, hay, &c. The inſide very curiouſly plaiſtered with cow-dung, not daubed, as ſome have ſaid, but with better ſkill than many of our plaiſterers could do the ſame work. The blackbird always plaiſters with clay or mud, this bird always with cow-dung; the firſt lays a covering of ſoft ſtuff in the inſide to lay her eggs upon; the thruſh lays hers upon the bare inſide or plaiſtering, (but not till it is thoroughly dry;) five or ſix in number, of a bluiſh green colour, ſpeckled with a few ſmall black ſpots, chiefly at the biggeſt end.

The length of a full grown bird, from the point of the bill to the end of the tail, is nine inches; of which the bill is one, and the tail three and a half; therefore, allowing for tail, bill, and head, which always lie out when ſhe

ſhe ſits in her neſt, the cavity is juſt fitted to receive her body. The ſame I have obſerved of the neſts of ſome other birds; eſpecially ſuch as build with ſides, and make deep cavities. The bird ſtands within ſide when ſhe is at work, and makes her own body the model of her dimenſions in building.

The ſong-thruſh has five or ſix young ones at a breeding; which may be taken at twelve or fourteen days old, or ſooner if it be mild weather; they muſt be kept warm and clean, and fed with raw meat, bread, and hemp-ſeed bruiſed; the meat cut ſmall, and the bread a little wet, and then mixed together. When grown up, they may be fed with fleſh meat, boiled, raw, or roaſted, provided it be not ſalt; or even only with bread and hemp-ſeed: when in the fields they feed on inſects and ſnails, as alſo berries of white-thorn and miſletoe.

The thruſh, called the Miſſel-bird, from its feeding on the berries of the miſletoe, deſerves further notice from its peculiarities.

This bird, in the colour and ſpots of the breaſt and belly, agrees with the ſong-thruſh; but is a larger bird, and very rare to be ſeen.

They build their neſt in a thicket, near where plenty of miſſletoe is, or in ſome pit, it being a very ſolitary ſort of bird; they make as large a neſt as a jay, and lay as big an egg; they build commonly with rotten twigs the outſide of their neſt, and the inſide is dead graſs, or moſs that they pull from trees. This bird delights mightily in old orchards. The hen breeds twice a year, and hath three young ones at a breeding, never above four, ſhe feeds all her young with the berries of miſſletoe, and nothing elſe that ever could be perceived.

THE FIELD-FARE, AND THE RED-WING.

THE Field-fare and the Red-wing make but a ſhort ſtay in this country. With us they are inſipid tuneleſs birds, flying in flocks, and exceſſively watchful to preſerve the general ſafety. All their ſeaſon of muſic and pleaſure is employed in the more northern climates, where they ſing moſt delightfully, perched among the foreſts of maples, with which thoſe countries abound. They build their neſts in hedges; and lay ſix bluiſh green eggs ſpotted with black.

THE STARLING.

THE Starling is nearly as big as the blackbird, and in ſhape very much like that bird, but is diſtinguiſhable from the reſt of this tribe by the gloſſy green of its feathers in ſome lights, and appearing purple in others. It does not ſing naturally, but has a wild, ſcreaming, uncouth note; yet, for his aptneſs in imitating man's voice, and ſpeaking articulately, and his learning to whiſtle divers tunes, is highly valued as a very pleaſant bird. In winter theſe birds aſſemble in vaſt flocks, and feed upon worms and inſects. At the approach of ſpring, they aſſemble in fields, as if in commutation together, and for three or four days ſeem to take no nouriſhment; the greater part leave this country; the reſt breed here, and bring up their young.

There is a mark peculiar to the cock of this kind, whereby he may be known from the hen

hen, whilſt young. Under his tongue he has a black ſtroke, very plain to be ſeen on opening his mouth, which the hen hath not, or at leaſt ſo faint, that it is hardly viſible; but the firſt time the cock moults his feathers, he loſes that black ſtroke: he may then be known from the hen by his colours, in the beauty of which he much excels her. His breaſt has a changeable caſt of green, red, and purple, the feathers all over his body are black, with a blue and purple gloſs, varying, as it is differently expoſed to the light; only the tips of the feathers on his head, neck, and breaſt, are yellowiſh; and on the belly, white: all his ſpots and colours are brighter than thoſe of the hen. The bill of the cock is of a pale yellow, inclining to white; of the hen, duſky.

This bird uſually breeds in May, has young ones fit to take towards the end of that month, ſometimes by the middle of it. They build their neſts in the holes of towers, ruins, pigeon-houſes, trees, and ſometimes in the cliffs of high rocks over the ſea. The goodneſs of theſe birds does not depend on the places where they breed, though ſome have given the preference to one ſort, and ſome to the other; for the ſame birds may build in any of thoſe places, as they find

find it moſt convenient for them. She lays four or five eggs, lightly tinctured with a greeniſh blue.

The beſt mode of teaching them to ſpeak, is conſtantly to make uſe of the ſame words every time any victuals is given them; to which, after a few repetitions, they will become attentive, and being apt birds, learn to articulate very diſtinctly in a very ſhort time. To ſlit their tongues, as many people adviſe and practice, that the birds, as they ſay, may talk the plainer, is a cruel and uſeleſs expedient, as they will talk perfectly as well without. The ſtarling, when wild, feeds upon beetles, worms, and other inſects.

The length of a full-grown bird, from the tip of his bill to the end of his tail, is nine inches, of which the bill is an inch and a quarter, and the tail three inches long; and, when in fleſh, weighs about three ounces. This bird is naturally hardy and healthy; but when kept in a cage is ſubject to the cramp, fits, &c. ſometimes it ſeizes him ſo ſuddenly, that he will fall down from his perch, and beat himſelf to death preſently; but a ſpider or meal-worm, is a good remedy againſt it, and ſhould be given him two or three at a time twice or thrice a week.

THE NIGHTINGALE.

NOTWITHSTANDING the preference given by different individuals to the notes of different ſong-birds, yet it is moſt generally allowed that the Nightingale ſtands moſt pre-eminent among this harmonious tribe. He ſends forth his pleaſant notes with ſo laviſh a freedom that he makes even the woods to echo with his melodious voice; and this delightful bird, ſcorning to be outdone, will not yield to any competitor, either of birds or men; the wood-lark is his greateſt antagoniſt, between whom there ſometimes happens ſuch a contention for maſtery, that they appear rather reſolved to die in their exertions than yield. This fame for a ſuperiority of voice is not, however, newly acquired, ſince almoſt every ancient naturaliſt has contributed to eſtabliſh its reputation. Pliny ſays, "The nightingale, that, for fifteen days "and nights hid in the thickeſt ſhades, con-

"tinues

" tinues her note without intermiſſion, deſerves " our attention and wonder. How ſurpriſing " that ſo great a voice can reſide in ſo ſmall a " body! ſuch perſeverance in ſo minute an " animal! With what a muſical propriety " are the ſounds it produces modulated! The " note at one time drawn out with a long " breath, now ſtealing off into a different " cadence, now interrupted by a break, then " changing into a new note by an unexpected " tranſition; now ſeeming to renew the ſame " ſtrain, then deceiving expectation! She ſome- " times ſeems to murmur within herſelf; full, " deep, ſharp, ſwift, drawling, trembling; now " at the top, the middle, and the bottom of the " ſcale! In ſhort, in that little bill ſeems to re- " ſide all the melody which man has vainly la- " boured to bring from a variety of muſical " inſtruments. Some even ſeem to be poſſeſſed " of a different ſong from the reſt, and con- " tend with each other with great vigour. " The bird overcome is then ſeen only to diſ- " continue its ſong with its life."

From Pliny's deſcription, we ſhould be led to believe this bird poſſeſſed of a perſevering ſtrain; but, though it is in fact ſo with the nightingale in Italy, yet in our hedges in England

land the little ſongſter is by no means ſo liberal of his muſic. His note is ſoft, various, and interrupted, and ſeldom continues it, without a pauſe, above the time that one can count twenty. The nightingale's pauſing ſong would be the proper epithet for this bird's muſic with us, which is more pleaſing than the warbling of any other bird, becauſe it is heard at a time when all the reſt are ſilent.

Its ſong, however, in captivity is not ſo very alluring; and the tyranny of taking it from thoſe hedges where only it is moſt pleaſing, ſtill more depreciates its impriſoned efforts. Geſner aſſures us, that it is not only the moſt agreeable ſongſter in a cage, but that it is poſſeſſed of a moſt admirable faculty of talking. He tells the following ſtory in proof of his aſſertion, which he ſays was communicated to him by a friend. "Whilſt I was at Ratiſ-"bon," ſays his correſpondent, "I put up at "an inn, the ſign of the Golden Crown, where "my hoſt had three nightingales. What I "am going to repeat is wonderful, almoſt in-"credible, and yet is true. The nightingales "were placed ſeparately, ſo that each was ſhut "up by itſelf in a dark cage. It happened at "that time, being the ſpring of the year, when

" thoſe birds are wont to ſing indefatigably,
" that I was ſo afflicted with the ſtone that I
" could ſleep but very little all night. It was
" uſual then about midnight, when there was
" no noiſe in the houſe, but all ſtill, to hear
" the two nightingales jangling, and talking
" with each other, and plainly imitating mens'
" diſcourſes. For my part, I was almoſt
" aſtoniſhed with wonder, for at this time,
" when all was quiet elſe, they held conference
" together, and repeated whatever they had
" heard among the gueſts by day. Thoſe two
" of them that were moſt notable, and maſters
" of this art, were ſcarce ten foot diſtant from
" one another. The third hung more remote,
" ſo that I could not ſo well hear it as I lay
" a-bed. But it is wonderful to tell how thoſe
" two provoked each other; and by anſwering,
" invited and drew one another to ſpeak. Yet
" did they not confound their words, or talk
" both together, but rather utter them alter-
" nately and of courſe. Beſides the daily diſ-
" courſe of the gueſts they chaunted out two
" ſtories, which generally held them from mid-
" night till morning; and that with ſuch modu-
" lations and inflections, that no man could
" have taken to come from ſuch little crea-
" tures.

" tures. When I aſked the hoſt if they had
" been taught, or whether he obſerved their
" talking in the night, he anſwered, no: the
" ſame ſaid the whole family. But I, who
" could not ſleep for nights together, was per-
" fectly ſenſible of their diſcourſe. One of
" their ſtories was concerning the tapſter and
" his wife, who refuſed to follow him to the
" wars, as he deſired her: for the huſband en-
" deavoured to perſuade his wife, as far as I un-
" derſtood by the birds, that he would leave
" his ſervice in that inn, and go to the wars in
" hopes of plunder. But ſhe refuſed to follow
" him, reſolving to ſtay either at Ratiſbon,
" or go to Nuremberg. There was a long
" and earneſt contention between them; and
" all this dialogue the birds repeated. They
" even repeated the unſeemly words which were
" caſt out between them, and which ought ra-
" ther to have been ſuppreſſed and kept a ſecret.
" But the birds, not knowing the difference
" between modeſt, immodeſt, honeſt and filthy
" words, did out with them. The other ſtory
" was concerning the war which the Emperor
" was then threatening againſt the proteſtants;
" which the birds probably heard from ſome
" of the generals that had conferences in the

" houſe. Theſe things did they repeat in the " night after twelve o'clock, when there was " a deep ſilence. But in the day-time, for the " moſt part, they were ſilent, and ſeemed to do " nothing but meditate and revolve with them- " ſelves upon what the gueſts conferred toge- " ther as they ſat at table, or in their walk. " I verily had never believed our Pliny writing " ſo many wonderful things concerning theſe " little creatures, had I not myſelf ſeen with " my eyes, and heard them with my ears ut- " tering ſuch things as I have related. Nei- " ther yet can I of a ſudden write all, or call " to remembrance every particular that I have " heard."

The nightingale is about the ſize of a gold-finch, but of a longer ſhape in the body; its length, from the tip of the bill to the end of the tail, meaſures nearly ſeven inches; the bill reſembles that of the thruſh, or blackbird; they have little variety in the colour of their feathers, nor have theſe birds any particular pretenſions to beauty; their backs and upper parts are of a faint tawney colour, with a greeniſh caſt, the tail-feathers being almoſt a reddiſh brown; their bellies are white, but the feathers under the throat and wings have a darker

darker ſhade, mixed with green; they have blackiſh bills, their feet are of a fleſh colour, and the inſides of their mouths yellow. The nightingales do not reſide in this climate the whole year; they come towards the latter end of March or beginning of April, and commence their emigration in September or October, but to whence they take their flight has not as yet been diſcovered.

They frequent cool and ſhady places, where there are little rivulets of water, and they build their neſts in cloſe thick hedges, pretty low, a little above the edge of the bank, and moſt commonly where briars and thorns are thickly interwoven, which are a ſtrong fence to them againſt the approach of their enemies; the neſt is made of the leaves of trees, ſtraw, and moſs, and in which the hen lays four or five eggs of a brown nutmeg colour, but ſhe ſeldom brings them all to perfection; their time of hatching is uſually about the middle of May.

A nightingale's neſt may be found by obſerving the place where the cock ſings, for the hen is never far off; or you may ſtick two or three meal-worms on the thorns near the place moſt frequented by the cock, and then obſerve, when

when he comes to take them, which way he carries them, and by liſtening you will hear the young, while the old ones are about feeding them, for they make a great noiſe for ſo ſmall a bird.

When you have found the neſt, if the young ones are not fledged enough to be taken, you muſt not touch them, for then the old ones will entice them away: they ſhould not be taken till they are almoſt as full of feathers as the old ones; and though they are apt to be ſullen and refuſe their meat, when taken ſo old, you may open their bills, and give them two or three ſmall pieces at a time, and they will ſoon grow tame and feed themſelves; they ſhould be immediately put, with the neſt, into a little baſket, covered up warm, and conſtantly fed every two hours. Their food ſhould be ſheep's hearts, or other raw fleſh-meat, chopped very fine, and all the ſtrings, ſkins, and fat taken away: and it ſhould always be mixed with hens' eggs boiled hard; they ſhould be put in cages like the nightingale's back-cage, with a little ſtraw or dry moſs at the bottom; but when they are grown large, they ſhould have ants' mould; they muſt be kept very clean, like other ſinging birds, for otherwiſe they will have

have the cramp, and perhaps the claws will drop off. In autumn they will ſometimes abſtain from their food for a fortnight, unleſs two or three meal-worms be given them two or three times a-week, or two or three ſpiders in a day; they muſt likewiſe have a little ſaffron in their water. Figs chopped ſmall among their meat will help them to recover their fleſh. When their legs are gouty, to which they are very ſubject after having been kept for ſome time in a cage, they ſhould be anointed with freſh butter, or capon's fat, three or four days together. If they grow melancholy, put white ſugar-candy into their water, and feed them with ſheep's heart, giving them three or four meal-worms in a day, and a few ants, with their eggs, and ſome of their mould at the bottom of their cage; among which, ſome hen's egg boiled hard, and chopped very ſmall, ſhould be ſtrewed, and ſome ſaffron put into their water.

The nightingales caught with nets very frequently prove good ſongſters; thoſe taken before the 23d of April are accounted the beſt, becauſe after that they pair with the hens. They uſually haunt woods, coppices, and quickſet hedges, where they may be taken with trap-cages, baited with meal-worms; they ſhould

ſhould be placed as near the ſpot where the bird ſings as you can, and before you fix the trap, turn up the earth twice the breadth of the cage, becauſe they will there look for food. They are alſo taken with lime twigs, placing them upon the hedge where they uſually ſing; and there ſhould be meal-worms ſtuck at places to draw them into the ſnare. After they are taken, their wings ſhould be gently tied with thread, to prevent their beating themſelves againſt the cage; but which ſhould be looſed again, as ſoon as he in any manner becomes familiar. He ſhould be firſt hung in a private place, that he may not be diſturbed, and ſhould be fed every two hours at fartheſt, with ſheep's heart and egg minced very fine, mingling amongſt it ſome worms, ants, caterpillars, or flies, he having been uſed to live upon ſuch food when at liberty. It very often happens that they will be ſullen at firſt; in which caſe, he muſt be taken in the hand, his bill forced open with a piece of ſtick made thin at one end, giving him as many pieces as he will willingly take: then he ſhould have ſome meat ſet at the bottom of the cage, and to entice him to eat, there ſhould be plenty of ants or meal-worms mixed with it; as he begins to eat freely, theſe may be diminiſhed

niſhed by degrees, until at laſt he has nothing but ſheep's heart and egg, and which for him is very good food.

THE LARK.

THE whole which come under this denomination, whether the ſky-lark, the wood, or the tit-lark, are all diſtinguiſhable from other ſmall birds by the length of their heels, and are louder in their ſong, though not ſo pleaſing as either of thoſe we have already ſpoken of; it is very true, as has been repeatedly obſerved, that the muſic of every bird in captivity produces no very pleaſing ſenſations; it is but the mirth of a little animal inſenſible of its unfortunate ſituation; it is the landſcape, the grove, the golden break of day, the conteſt upon the hawthorn, the fluttering from branch to branch, the ſoaring in the air, and the anſwering of its young, that gives the bird's ſong its true reliſh.

Theſe united, improve each other, and raiſe the mind to a ſtate of the higheſt, yet moſt harmleſs exultation. Nothing can, in this ſituation of mind, be more pleaſing than to ſee the lark warbling upon the wing; raiſing its note as it ſoars until it ſeems loſt in the immenſe heights above us; the note continuing, the bird itſelf unſeen; to ſee it then deſcending with a ſwell as it comes from the clouds, yet ſinking by degrees as it approaches its reſt, the ſpot where all its affections are centered; the ſpot that has prompted all this joy. This harmony continues ſeveral months, beginning early in the ſpring, on pairing. In winter they aſſemble in flocks, when their ſong forſakes them, and the bird-catchers deſtroy them in great numbers for the tables of the luxurious.

To diſtinguiſh a cock from the hen in this kind is no eaſy matter, and about which there are various opinions, but hardly one that can be depended upon; ſome ſay the bird that ſets up his feathers on his crown is certainly a cock, and that the longeſt heel bird is another ſure ſign, as is the having two white feathers in their tail; but theſe concluſions are all very uncertain. When they are grown up, and fully feathered, that general remark, in ſome meaſure,

ſure, will hold good, that the higheſt-coloured bird is the cock; for whoever obſerves them together, may perceive the cock-lark to be ſomething browner upon the back, of a more yellowiſh caſt on the throat and breaſt, and the feathers whiter upon the belly.

The ſky-lark has young ones by the end of April, or beginning of May. The hen builds her neſt, ſuch as it is, for ſhe uſes but very little ſtuff about it, only with a few bents, or ſuch like materials, always upon the ground, or in a hole made by the foot of a horſe, the wheel of a cart, &c. either in corn-fields of any ſort, or in paſture of any kind, and lays four or five brown eggs, almoſt of the colour of a clod of earth, thickly ſpeckled with browniſh ſpecks.

As the ſky-lark is a valuable bird with thoſe who admire the feathered ſongſters in the cage, both from his freeneſs of ſinging, his pleaſant harmonious notes for at leaſt eight months in the year, and being a long-lived, healthful bird, many of them having been kept for the ſpace of fifteen or ſixteen years, and ſung ſtoutly the whole time, the following particulars reſpecting the taking and managing it may not be unacceptable:

Theſe birds muſt be taken when about ten days old; if let alone longer there is a great hazard of loſing them, as they have been known to quit their neſt in ſeven or eight days, when they have been diſturbed; if the old ones ſee any perſon look at their young they will then entice them away of a ſudden; and in rainy weather, it is ſurpriſing to ſee how young they will leave their neſt; one would naturally think the neſt to be the beſt and ſafeſt place for them in ſuch weather; but ſo it is, that the young of moſt, if not all kinds of birds, are nouriſhed more, their feathers grow faſter, and they ſooner fly, or quit their neſts, in wet, than in dry weather.

When you have taken a neſt of young, put them into a baſket with ſome ſhort clean hay at the bottom, cover and tie them down cloſe and warm, and feed them with white bread and milk boiled thick, mixed with about a third part of rape-ſeed, ſoaked, boiled, and bruiſed: ſome bring them up with ſheep's heart minced very fine, or ot er fleſh meat. Great care is neceſſary, in bringing up young birds, to keep them clean, and feed them regularly once in about two hours, from morning till night, with freſh and wholeſome food, as that is the princi-

pal

pal means of preſerving them: in a week's time you may cage them in a large cage, putting ſome hay cut pretty ſhort, or coarſe bran at the bottom, turning or ſhifting it every day. Order them after this manner till they can feed themſelves with dry meat, viz. bread, egg, and hemp-ſeed, which they will do in about three weeks or a month. Remember to boil your egg very hard, grate it fine, and mix it with an equal quantity of hemp-ſeed bruiſed, while the birds are young, but when they are able to crack the ſeed, give it them whole, and a little bread grated among it. You may then let them have a freſh turf of graſs once or twice a week, and ſift ſome fine dry gravel at the bottom of the cage, ſhifting it often, that it may not clog their feet: for change of diet, you may ſometimes give them a little of the fleſh meat. After they have done moulting, you may give them bread, egg, and whole hemp-ſeed, every other day, and a freſh turf once a week. As the birds are of an hardy nature, this careful management will preſerve them many years.

This bird at full growth is ſix inches and a quarter long; of which the tail is three inches, and the bill three quarters of an inch. When in fleſh it weighs about an ounce and a half.

The

The ſky-lark, as mentioned before, ſeldom ails any thing; but if you perceive him at any time to ſcour, or dung looſe, grate a ſmall matter of old cheeſe among his victuals, or give him three or four wood-lice in a day, or a ſpider or two, and in his water a little ſaffron, or liquorice; theſe are the beſt things we can recommend, and what will relieve him, though he wont often ſtand in need of any thing more than good meat and drink, clean gravel, and a freſh turf.

There are ſeveral ways practiſed of catching ſky-larks, according to their ages. To take Puſhers; they are birds which have left their neſt three or four days: to take them, you muſt watch in ſome convenient place, as much out of the old ones' ſight as poſſible; either ſtand cloſe in a hedge, or lie down in the field, &c. and you will preſently ſee them bring meat to feed their young; which, as ſoon as you perceive, and obſerve them to hover juſt over the graſs, &c. and drop down on a ſudden, run in upon them as faſt as you can, where you will generally find the young birds; if you miſs them, ſearch narrowly about, for they will creep into ſome hole and lie cloſe, or in a large turf of graſs, &c. ſometimes they will run away among the graſs or corn, exceeding faſt; when they

they do that, you can very ſeldom catch any: you muſt wait for the old ones bringing them meat again; but don't run in the firſt time; ſee if they come two or three times with meat, and ſettle at the ſame place; if at different places, and at little diſtances from each other, then you may be ſure the young ones have ſtraggled in the fright, and are at thoſe different places; you may then run in where you judge they are by the conſtant coming of the old birds, who will find them out, and ſoon get them together again.

When you take any of theſe birds, put them in a large cage with hay or coarſe bran at the bottom, and feed and order them as you do the neſtling. If you find them ſullen that they wont eat, you muſt for a little while cram them with ſheep's heart, &c. they will ſoon come to. Theſe birds generally prove as good, or better, than thoſe raiſed from the neſt.

Thoſe young birds are called branchers, that were bred, and flew that year, about two or three months old, before they have moulted their neſtling feathers; what are taken at that age, before they begin to moult, are very good, little inferior to the neſtlings; but after they have moulted, or in moult when taken, they ſeldom prove good birds.

The

The time for taking branchers is in June or July, with a hawk, and a net of about eleven or twelve yards long, and three or four broad, with a line run through the middle of it. The haunt of the larks being diſcovered, the hawk is thrown up, and kept juſt hovering above the head; at the ſight of which, they will lie ſo cloſe that you may very eaſily draw your net over them. When you have taken them, give them bread, egg, and bruiſed hemp-ſeed; put in the bottom of the cage red ſand, and ſtrew them a little meat in the cage for two or three days, and they will preſently become tame.

Sky-larks are alſo taken in flight with clap-nets in great numbers. In ſome places they take them with a glaſs, called a larking-glaſs; this they uſe on a ſun-ſhiny day, which makes great havock amongſt theſe birds: but the moſt deſtructive way is in the dark nights with a net called a trammel; it is a very murdering net, taking all ſorts of birds that it comes near, as partridges, quails, &c. Larks are enſnared likewiſe with a nooſe made with two horſe-hairs twiſted together, which catches them by the neck or legs. This way is practiſed when the ground is covered with a deep ſnow.

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Wood Lark. *Robin Redbreast*

Edge Sparrow. *Red Start.*

THE WOOD-LARK.

THIS bird is univerſally admired for his great variety of ſoft and delightful notes, that, in the opinion of ſome people, he is preferable to the nightingale for ſinging, and if hung in the ſame room, will ſtrive with him for the maſtery. If brought up from the neſt, and caged near the nightingale, he will learn his notes, and, as it were, incorporate them with his own. He is of great beauty, both in ſhape and plume: his breaſt and belly are of a pale yellowiſh hair-colour, faintly ſpotted with black; the back and head are party-coloured, of black and reddiſh yellow.

The cock is flat-headed, and full behind the ears, with a white ſtroke from each noſtril, forming a curve-line over the eye, and almoſt meeting behind the neck; the whiteneſs of this line, and its extenſion behind the neck, are the

beſt ſigns to diſtinguiſh the male: they are full cheſted, long from the neck to the ſhoulder of the wing, narrow on the vent and rump; the rump part a dark bown, with a long lightiſh tail, and the two corner feathers touched with white; long in body, and carries himſelf upright; ſome of the feathers under the throat have ſmall ſtripes; they have three ſmall white feathers on the top of the ſhoulder, and a long heel.

The hen is narrow-headed, and brown over the eyes, flattiſh from the breaſt to the belly, and round at the rump, ſhort-heeled, and only two whitiſh, dull, or cream-coloured feathers on the ſhoulder, and the curve-line of the head reaches but a little beyond the eye.

The wood-lark is a very tender bird, and yet breeds early in the ſpring, as ſoon as the blackbird, or any other; the young birds being ready to fly by the middle of March. They build at the foot of a buſh or a hedge, or in lays where the graſs is wet or dry, under ſome turf to ſhelter them from the weather. Their neſt is made of withered graſs, fibrous roots, and other ſuch like matter, with a few horſehairs within ſide at the bottom, being a ſmall, and very indifferent fabric, and hardly any hollow

low or ſides; the weight of the bird is a little above an ounce; its length ſix inches, of which the bill is ſomething above half an inch, and the tail two inches. She lays four eggs, of a pale bloom colour, beautifully mottled, and clouded with red, yellow, &c.

The young ones are tender birds, and exceedingly difficult to bring up from the neſt; they muſt not be taken too ſoon, not before they are well feathered; becauſe, when they are too young, they are more ſubject to the cramp and ſcouring, which commonly kills them: put them into a baſket with a little hay at the bottom, or ſome ſuch thing, where they may lie clean and warm, tying them cloſe down: feed them with ſheep's heart, or other lean fleſh meat, raw, mixed with a hard boiled egg, a little bread, and hemp-ſeed bruiſed or ground, all chopped together as fine as it is poſſible to do it, and made a little moiſt with clean water; every two hours, or oftener, give them five or ſix ſmall bits, taking great care never to overload their tender ſtomachs. The wild ones feed upon beetles, caterpillars, and other inſects; and alſo upon almoſt any ſeeds they meet with.

The branchers are taken in June and July, with a net and a hawk, after the ſame manner as the ſky-larks. They are to be found harbouring about gravel-pits, upon heath and common land, and in paſture fields. For fear of the hawk, they will lie ſo cloſe, that ſometimes they ſuffer themſelves to be taken up with the hand. Theſe birds ſoon grow tame.

The next ſeaſon is for Michaelmas birds, which are taken with clap-nets in great numbers in September, and are counted better birds than what are catched at any other time of the year, becauſe keeping them all the winter makes them more tame than birds catched in January or February, and will ſing eight or nine months in the year. Wood-larks at this time commonly fly very high, therefore the higheſt ground is uſually choſe to lay the nets upon, likewiſe in a cart-way, or where a ſpot of earth is freſh turned up, or ſometimes you may turn it up on purpoſe.

A third ſeaſon for taking wood larks is in January; what are caught at that time are very ſtout, good birds, and will ſing in a few days after they are taken, both ſtouter and louder than thoſe taken in September, but will not ſing ſo many months; theſe are catched with the

the clap-net likewiſe, as they are at Michaelmas, and are found at that time of the year lying near a wood ſide in paſture ground, where the ſun riſes.

Wood-larks are ſometimes taken when they are matched with their hen; but the end of January ought to be the lateſt time for taking them, becauſe they are early breeding birds, and if taken later, are worth very little; it is true, he will ſing almoſt as ſoon as taken, by reaſon of his rankneſs in having accompanied the hen, but will ſoon fall off from his ſong, and be heard little more all that ſummer.

All the wood-larks, taken at different ſeaſons, muſt be fed alike with hemp-ſeed bruiſed very fine, and mixed with bread and egg hard boiled and grated, or chopped as ſmall as poſſible. When firſt taken, he will be ſhy, but by ſifting ſome fine red gravel in the bottom of his cage, and ſcattering ſome of his meat upon it, he may be enticed to eat ſooner than out of his trough, and in general, by that means, will be brought to eat freely in the courſe of three or four days.

His diet ſhould be ordered, in a great meaſure, as the ſky-lark's, except giving him a turf of graſs, of which he ſhould not have any, but

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but often fine red gravel in his cage; and when not well, inſtead of that, mould full of ants, which is the moſt agreeable live food can be given him. Or give him meal-worms, or hog-lice, not more than two or three a-day: and let him have a little ſaffron or liquorice ſometimes in his water. If he ſhould ſcour, grate chalk or cheeſe among his meat, and amongſt his gravel likewiſe. He will eat any kind of fleſh meat minced fine, which it is well now and then to let him have for change of diet, always leaving ſome of his conſtant meat in the cage at the ſame time, that he may eat which he will.

THE TIT-LARK.

IS leſs by one half than the ſky-lark, being only ſix inches in length, and ten inches and a quarter in breadth; and is of a more greeniſh colour; the head is ſmall, and the body pretty long and ſlender; the iris of the eye is hazel, and the top of the head and upper part of the body are of a yellowiſh green, with a mixture of black and aſh-colour: the ſides of the wings are of a duſky brown, with the edges and tops of the feathers ſomewhat greeniſh, ſome of a pale yellow, and others white; the breaſt is of a pale duſky colour, ſpotted with black, but the belly is whiter, and free from ſpots; the tail is above two inches long, and ſome of the upper parts of the outmoſt feathers are white, and others brown, with pale green edges; the feet are yellow, and the claws are very long, and of a pale duſky colour; they feed upon inſects and

ſeeds

ſeeds, like other larks, but they build their neſts with moſs in low buſhes, not far from the ground, covering them on the inſide with horſe-hair; they generally lay five or ſix eggs, of a dark brown colour, and the young are commonly hatched about the beginning of June.

In this kind the cock is all over more yellow than the hen, but eſpecially under the throat, on the breaſt, legs, and ſoles of the feet. In neſtlings, they cannot well be diſtinguiſhed by their colours, therefore muſt wait till you hear them begin to record their ſong, which is the firſt ſureſt ſign of a cock-bird.

The hen tit-lark builds amongſt graſs, or in corn-fields; her neſt is ſmall, pretty much like the wood-lark's; ſhe lays five or ſix eggs, of a dark brown colour, and has young ones fit to take towards the end of May.

They may be brought up with the ſame meat and management as young wood-larks or nightingales; but it is hardly worth the trouble, becauſe ſo many are taken, when they firſt come to viſit our part of the world, both with clap-nets, and lime twigs, as they catch linnets, gold-finches, &c. When you firſt take them, tie the ends of their wings with thread

thread, to prevent their fluttering and beating themſelves againſt the cage, and they will ſoon grow tame. Feed them as you do the wood or ſky-lark; at firſt give them hemp-ſeed and bread, made very fine and mixed together; likewiſe ants' mould in their cage, meal-worms, &c. ſtrew their victuals about their cage, to allure them to eat, and in three or four days they will take it freely enough: and will ſing in about a week's time. Cage them ſingle, in a cage ſomewhat cloſer than the common wood-lark's, which is very neceſſary to prevent their doing themſelves an injury.

THE ROBIN-REDBREAST.

THIS is a well known bird all over the kingdom; and is much admired for the freedom and ſhrillneſs of his ſong. The cock has a ſweet melodious voice, ſo free and ſhrill, that very few birds can equal it. His own natural ſong, becauſe it is an exceeding

good one, is preferable to any that can be taught him.

The eyes and upper part of the Robin's bill are encompaſſed with a fine deep red, or orange-colour, like that upon the breaſt; the upper parts of the body are of a duſky brown, ſhaded with a greeniſh olive-colour, with a pale bluiſh line upon the neck; the belly whitiſh, the legs and feet of a duſky black.

In the winter time, when there is a ſcarcity of meat in the fields, to ſeek his food he will enter into houſes with much confidence, being a very bold bird, ſociable and familiar with man, but not with any bird beſides his own mate.

In the ſummer, when there is plenty of food in the fields, and he is not pinched with cold, he will withdraw himſelf into the moſt deſert places, where he generally builds his neſt, and lives upon worms, ants, their eggs, and other inſects, &c. Notwithſtanding, theſe birds are ſaid to withdraw from houſes into the woods in the ſummer time, as indeed moſt of them do, yet there are a great many that breed and harbour about farm-yards and out-houſes all the year through.

The

The cock may be known by his breaſt, being of a deeper red than the hen's, and the red going up farther upon the head, and ſome ſay by the colour of his legs, which are darker, and by certain hairs which grow on each ſide of his bill: the bright red breaſt is a mark that may be depended upon, the others do not always hold. The cock is likewiſe of a darker olive upon the upper ſurface of his whole body.

The Robin breeds in the ſpring, and is ſo prolific that ſome of them are ſaid to have two or three neſts in the months of April, May, and June. The hen builds her neſt on the ſide of a ditch or bank, amongſt thorns and briars, or hedges; likewiſe in the woods, which they haunt in ſummer. Thoſe that ſtay about farm-yards build in out-houſes, and broken walls of old buildings; her neſt is made of coarſe materials, the outſide of dry green moſs, intermixed with coarſe wool, ſmall dried ſticks, ſtraws, leaves, peelings from young trees, and other dried ſtuff, lined with a few horſe hairs, on which ſhe lays five or ſix eggs, but ſometimes no more than four, of a cream colour, ſprinkled all over with fine reddiſh yellow ſpots at the

blunt end, ſo thick that they appear almoſt in one. This bird is near ſix inches in length, from the tip of the bill to the end of the tail, the former being about half an inch, and the latter two inches and an half.

They may be taken at ten or twelve days old; if left too long, they are apt to be ſullen, and conſequently much more troubleſome to bring up; they ſhould at firſt be put in a little baſket, with ſoft hay at the bottom, and kept very warm, eſpecially in the night. In bringing up they ſhould be treated in the ſame manner, and ſupplied with the ſame food as we have mentioned for the woodlark and nightingale.

This bird is very ſubject to the cramp, and a giddineſs of the head, which makes him often fall off from his perch upon his back, and it is preſent death, unleſs he has ſome help ſpeedily given him. The beſt method to prevent it is, to keep him warm and clean in his cage; and as a cure, two or three meal-worms now and then for the former, and ſix or ſeven earwigs in a week for the latter.

If he has a little appetite to eat, give him now and then ſix or ſeven hog-lice, which may be found in any piece of old rotten wood, and

and never let him want water that is freſh, two or three times a-week.

There are many kinds of inſects that birds will eat greedily, and very probably would relieve them under ſuch maladies, could they be conveniently procured at all times, ſuch as young ſmooth caterpillars, (a robin will not touch a hairy one) ſome ſorts of ſpiders, ants, &c. but there is no inſect that is more innocent, or agrees better with birds in general, than the meal-worm, which may be had with little trouble at the meal-ſhops almoſt at any time.

Above all, to prevent theſe diſeaſes, be ſure to keep them very clean and warm, always putting dry ſoft gravel in the bottom of their cages, taking care never to let them want freſh water and wholeſome food; and ſometimes put in his water a blade or two of ſaffron, and a ſlice of liquorice, which will make him long-winded, and help him very much in his ſong.

When taken old he is apt to be ſullen at firſt, and refuſe to eat his meat, but by giving him a few worms cut ſmall amongſt a little freſh earth, crumbs of bread, &c. in the bottom of his cage, in two or three days he will take

take his meat freely enough; a young cock-bird, when taken by a trap, will ſing in as ſhort a time.

As to the extent of this bird's life, he ſeldom lives above ſeven years, by reaſon he is ſo ſubject to the falling ſickneſs, cramp, and oppreſſion of the ſtomach.

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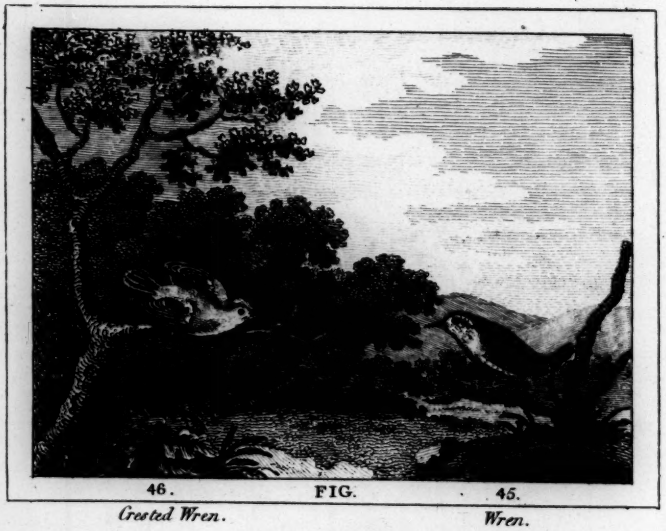

46. FIG. 45.

Crested Wren. *Wren.*

FIG. 47. 48. 49.

Humming Birds

THE COMMON WREN.

THIS is the ſmalleſt bird found in this kingdom, excepting the golden-crowned wren, it weighs about three drachms; its length, from the point of the bill to the end of the tail, is about four inches. It commonly creeps about hedges and holes, making but ſhort flights, and, if it be driven from the hedges, may eaſily be tired and run down. It will ſit upon a barn, or tree, about farm-yards, where it moſtly frequents, and ſing exceeding fine; when kept in a cage, it will ſing very ſweetly, and with a higher and louder voice than would be imagined for its ſtrength and bigneſs, and is a very pleaſant bird, that will ſing a great many months in the year. Many perſons have kept theſe birds a long time in a cage, and have had them to ſing as ſtout as if they were in the fields, and with equal freedom and mellowneſs of ſong.

The

The cock is of a dark colour; the head, neck, and upper parts of the body, are of a mixed brown; the throat of paliſh yellow; the breaſt more inclined to white, the belly of a duſky-coloured red; the tips of the wings, and covert-feathers of the tail, are beautifully variegated with a few yellowiſh and blackiſh ſpots upon them. The hen-bird is all over of a reddiſh brown colour, excepting the lines acroſs her tail and wings, which are black and reddiſh. The bird with the largeſt eye is generally thought to be a cock. The difference in thoſe birds, while young, can hardly be known, till the cock begins to record and ſing.

The wren has young ones in May; ſhe builds her neſt ſometimes in the holes of old walls, and frequently in the eaves of thatched buildings, but more commonly in woods and hedges, in a very artificial manner: it is of a ſort of oval form, reſembling an egg, covered over at top, and hath in the middle of the ſide a ſmall round hole to go in and out at. The outſide is of green moſs and fog, the inſide of hair, wool, and feathers, on which the hen lays ſometimes to the number of fifteen or ſixteen eggs; but many times hatches not half that number

number; they are very ſmall white eggs, ſprinkled all over with ſmall red ſpots.

In taking the young from the neſt, it is neceſſary to leave them till they are well feathered. In rearing they ſhould be fed and treated like young nightingales and robins, giving them but little at a time. When they are grown fit for a cage, they ſhould have a large one, made with very cloſe wire, with three ſides wood, and one ſide wire; it requires to be lined with a cloth, or bays, for keeping them warm: though it is a very ſmall bird, yet a ſmall cage does not agree with it, nor with any bird whatſoever, though it is often practiſed.

In the winter time eſpecially they muſt be kept very warm and clean, and frequently have dry gravel given them in their cage.

CRESTED, OR GOLDEN WREN,

IS ſaid to be the ſmalleſt bird found in this kingdom, not weighing more than three drachms, and has a ſlender ſtraight black bill; it has an exceeding beautiful ſmall row of feathers on

the top of the head, of a fine gold or orange colour, which it has a power of drawing together in ſuch a manner as entirely to conceal the little creſt, by laying the feathers all flat upon the head, and likewiſe to raiſe them at pleaſure; the form of them is long, as they take their riſe from the baſe of the bill, and extend themſelves to the back of the head, on each ſide of which there runs a black line: the eyes are encircled with white, the ſides of the neck of a fine ſhining yellowiſh green, the breaſt of a duſky white; the back is of a greeniſh colour, with a mixture of yellow. The quill-feathers of the wings are of a duſky brown, with ſome of their edges yellow, others white, the tips of ſome of thoſe next to the covert-feathers are alſo white, the tips of ſome of the coverts being of the ſame colour, form a white line acroſs the wing. The tail is of a duſky colour, about an inch and half long, with ſome of the edges of the feathers of a yellowiſh green, the feet and claws are pretty near of the ſame colour.

They lay ſix or ſeven very ſmall eggs, not larger than peas, and feed upon ſmall inſects.

They

They are found in ſome of the woods about Oxford, alſo in Warwickſhire, about Middleton Park, and in ſeveral places in Wales. It is a beautiful but not very common bird. It has ſometimes been found in the ſouthern parts of Scotland.

THE RED-START.

THIS bird is ſo named from its red tail, and is in ſize ſomething leſs than the robin-red-breaſt. The cock is very fair, beautifully coloured, and exceeding pleaſant to the eye. His breaſt, rump, and tail, are of a fine red; the back, neck, and hind-part of the head, of a lead colour; the fore-part of his head, and throat, of a jet black, and he has a white mark upon his pole.

The hen is a beautiful bird likewiſe; and partakes more of the colour of the nightingale, with a red tail, ſomething fainter than the cock's. The cock is known at all times

from the hen, by his black head; that mark being peculiar to the male only.

Theſe birds breed in May, and have young ones fit to be taken about the middle of that month. They commonly build in holes of trees, or under houſe eaves, and make their neſt with all ſorts of things, ſuch as dry graſs, ſmall roots of herbs, leaves, horſe-hair, wool, and ſuch as the place affords them. Their eggs are like thoſe of the hedge-ſparrows, but of a paler blue, and not ſo big.

With regard to their neſt, they are the moſt ſhy of all birds; for if they perceive themſelves obſerved when building, they will forſake the neſt; and if any of their eggs are touched, they never come near them any more; and if they chance to have young ones the hen will either ſtarve or throw them out of the neſt, and break their necks; and ſo exceedingly watchful is ſhe, that it is almoſt impoſſible to go near it without her knowledge.

They are of a very ſullen diſpoſition; and if taken after flight, will not for ſome days even look at their meat, and though they will at laſt take to feeding, they are a long time before they ſing; but if brought up from the neſt, they are gentle and tame. They muſt be taken

out

out of the neſt at about ten days old; for if left there too long, they are apt to learn ſome of the old bird's temper, and be very ſullen.

Feed them with ſheep's heart and egg, minced very ſmall, as the nightingale or robin, giving them but little at a time.

They may be kept in what cage you pleaſe; only let them be kept warm in the winter, and they will ſing in the night as well as the day; and may learn to whiſtle and imitate other birds.

When wild they feed upon inſects like the robin, &c. They are ſuppoſed to emigrate in the winter, ſince very few of them, in compariſon, are ſeen in this country during that ſeaſon.

THE WHITE THROAT

IS a ſmall bird that weighs about half an ounce, the bill not above half an inch long, the upper chap black, the lower white; the tongue is forked or ſlit at the point, and the inſide of the mouth of a yellowiſh colour; the upper

upper part of the head is of a dark aſh-colour; and the reſt of the body and wings of a light brown, with a rediſh caſt, or ſhade; ſome of the edges of the quill-feathers white; the breaſt, throat and belly white, with a few pale ſhady marks interſperſed here and there, both upon the breaſt and belly. The fore toes ſmall, the hind toe more large.

They come into moſt parts of the kingdom in the ſpring, and leave us in the latter end of ſummer; and are in ſome places called willow witches, I ſuppoſe from their being found frequently by the ſides of ſmall ponds of water, where they creep in the low ſhady buſhes, hopping up and down upon the withy and willow buſhes. They build their neſts generally on the ſides of ditch banks, under the ſmall buſhes where they lay five or ſix ſmall duſky coloured eggs, of a greeniſh white colour, and ſpotted with black. They feed on flies and ſmall inſects.

THE TIT-MOUSE.

THE Tit-mouſe, or, as it is more generally called, the Tom-tit, is alſo a ſmall bird; it has a ſtraight black bill, about half an inch long, pretty thick. The upper part of the head, and the chin are black, with a large ſpot of white beginning at the baſe of the bill, and paſſing under the eyes to the ſides of the neck; with a white line upon the hinder part of the head, which ſeparates the black of the head from the yellow colour of the neck; which colour deſcends as low as the ſhoulders and middle part of the back, where it appears more ſhaded with a gloſſy green; the rump is of a fine blue. The quill-feathers have ſome of their tips white, ſome blue, others green, the covert feathers by their white tips, make a ſmall tranſverſe white line upon each wing. The breaſt, belly, and thighs are yellow, with a broad black line paſſing from the throat down the

the middle of the breaſt to the vent. The tail is about two inches and a half long, of a black colour, except the outward edges of ſome of the feathers, which are blue. The legs and feet are of a ſort of lead colour.

The *bearded tit-mouſe* is not ſo large as the former, the bill is thick and ſhort, of a yellowiſh colour; the head is of a dark aſh colour, with a tuft of feathers that begin at the baſe of the bill, and are continued beyond the eyes, which hang down upon the ſides of the neck in a ſort of picked, triangular form; from which it is ſaid to take the name of *beard-manica*. The back, wings, and upper part of the body are brown, the breaſt and lower parts of a yellowiſh white, ſhaded with a duſky brown; the outmoſt feathers on each wing are white, with two remarkable white ſpots on the upper coverts. The tail is of a brown colour, about two inches long.

The hen is more beautiful than the cock, not quite ſo large, of a more yellowiſh brown, and has not the beard; the cock is ſaid to be exceeding fond of her, and covers her all the night, while at rooſt, with his wing. They are not very common in many parts of the kingdom, but are more frequently ſeen in the fens

fens in Lincolnſhire, and in ſome parts of Eſſex.

The *long-tailed tit-mouſe* has a ſhort ſtrong black bill, with a number of ſmall feathers growing about the noſtrils, the eyes are large, the iris of which are hazel coloured, and the edges of the lids yellow. The crown of the head is white, with a large black ſcolloped mark in a circular form over each eye, which extends itſelf to the hinder part of the head. The back is of a light brown or cheſnut colour, with a few black ſpots upon it, the quill-feathers black, with ſome of their edges white; the breaſt and belly are white, interſperſed with ſmall duſky ſpots. The tail is very long, and ſhaped like that of the magpie, the ſhafts of ſome of the outer feathers white, and ſome few of the tips of the ſame colour. The legs and feet black.

It forms a very artful neſt reſembling that of the wren, of which ſee the account given by Mr. Derham in his Phyſico Theology, p. 232, 233.

"Among many inſtances that might be "given of the ſubtlety of birds, and other crea-"tures, that of the long-tailed titmouſe de-"ſerves obſervation, who with great art builds

" her neſt with moſs, hair, and the web of " ſpiders caſt out from them when they take " their flight, with which the other materials " are ſtrongly tied together. Having neatly " built, and covered her neſt with theſe mate- " rials; without ſhe thatcheth it on the top " with the *muſcus arboreus ramioſus*, or ſuch " like broad whitiſh moſs, to keep out rain, " and to dodge the ſpectator's eye: and within " ſhe lineth it with a great number of ſoft fea- " thers; ſo many, that I confeſs I could not " but admire how ſo ſmall a room could hold " them, eſpecially that they could be laid " ſo cloſe and handſomely together, to afford " ſufficient room for a bird with ſo long a tail, " and ſo numerous an iſſue as this bird com- " monly hath."

Theſe birds are ſaid to be very beneficial in the ſpring to the trees, by deſtroying the young caterpillars, and likewiſe the eggs of thoſe inſects that ſo commonly deſtroy the fruit, which they do by tearing the webs to pieces, and eating up the animalculas that are incloſed in them.

THE WATER-WAGTAIL

IS a ſlender-bodied bird, that weighs about ſix drachms, and is about ſeven inches and a half, from the tip of the bill to the end of the tail, and about eleven from the point of each wing when extended. It has a ſlender, ſtraight, ſharp bill, of a black or duſky colour, upwards of half an inch long: the circles of the eyes brown, or hazel coloured, with a large white ſpot encircling each eye; and another or two underneath it, on each ſide of the throat; the top of the head and the fore part of the neck, or throat, and the upper part of the back, are all black. Some of the tips of the quill-feathers are white, which form a ſmall white line upon the wing, and another is alſo formed by the white edges of ſome of the rows of the covert feathers; the lower part of the breaſt and belly are both white.

The tail is about three inches long, which is almoſt continually in motion, wagging up and down, from whence it is ſuppoſed to derive the name of *wagtail*; the outmoſt feathers are moſt white, the reſt black. The claws are ſharp pointed, and pretty long, of a duſky, or blackiſh colour.

They are frequently ſeen about the brinks of rivers, ponds, and ſmall pools of water, and alſo amongſt the low graſs in dewy mornings, where they feed upon flies, worms, beetles, and other ſmall inſects. They build under the eaves of houſes, and in holes in the walls of old buildings; laying four or five eggs.

THE STONE-CHATTER

IS a ſmall ſized bird, that does not weigh much more than half an ounce, the bill of a blackiſh duſky colour, not half an inch long, the tongue a little cloven at the end, the eyes of a brown or hazel colour. The head is large and nearly wholly black, the throat under the bill, and the upper part of the back, are of the ſame colour, in the cock bird; but the hen is more pale, and inclining to a ſandy, or dirty coloured red. It has a large white ſpot upon each ſide of the neck, which at a little diſtance looks like a collar or ring; with another conſiderably ſmaller upon the rump. The breaſt is of a paliſh orange colour, but more fading and pale on the lower part of the belly. The feathers on the wings are of a duſky colour, both the prime and coverts have their edges red, with a pretty large white ſpot upon each ſide.

The

The tail is about two inches long, of a duſky colour, with the tips and ſome of the webs of the outermoſt feathers upon the ſides white. The legs and feet black.

They are found chiefly upon heaths and commons, amongſt the goſs and ling; where they feed upon worms, beetles, and other ſmall inſects.

The hen is diſtinguiſhed from the cock, by having her feathers upon the head and upper parts of her body, a great deal more of a reddiſh colour, with a ſhade of green, the rump quite red; the feathers under the chin aſh-coloured, and thoſe lower upon the breaſt, of a deeper colour than the cocks.

THE HEDGE SPARROW

IS conſiderably leſs than the common ſparrow; it has a pretty long ſlender bill, of a duſky or bluiſh colour, and more ſlender than the reſt of thoſe which come under the denomination of ſparrows.

This is not ſo deſpicable a bird as a great many imagine; for it has very delightful notes in its ſong, and not a little variety; they ſing very early in the ſpring, and are frequently kept in cages by curious perſons, who value them much.

The cuckoo, who builds no neſt of her own, generally drops her egg in the neſt of this bird, where it is hatched by the hedge-ſparrow to the certain deſtruction of her own young.

The cock's head is of a duſky-coloured brown, with a ſort of bluiſh caſt; the upper part of his body is of a dark brown, with a very ſmall mixture, or rather ſhade of red; the breaſt of a bluiſh or red colour, with a few ſmall ſhady ſpots upon it; the belly more duſkiſh.

duſkiſh. The hen is known from the cock, being conſiderably paler upon the breaſt, and the colour upon her back more bright.

They have young ones generally about the latter end of April, or beginning of May, and build their neſt almoſt in every hedge, low and open, that it may be found with little difficulty. It conſiſts chiefly of fine green moſs, and the inſide lined with a little hair, on which the hen lays commonly five eggs, much different from other birds, being of a pale blue, or ſea-green colour.

The hedge-ſparrow will feed almoſt on any thing you can give him; he is a very tractable bird, and will learn to pipe, whiſtle, or imitate the ſong of almoſt any other bird with whom he is brought up from the neſt.

THE HUMMING BIRD.

AMONG the beautiful varieties of the feathered race there are but few that equal, and none that ſurpaſs the brilliancy of colouring diſplayed by this little animal, which, in fact, may be conſidered as one of the moſt ſplendid gems in animated nature, and of which it is almoſt impoſſible to give an adequate idea, even by the moſt minute deſcription. This ſpecies conſiſts of ſeveral varieties, the largeſt not being above half the ſize of a common wren, and from which they gradually decreaſe to that of an humble bee. They have been already ſo ably treated on by a celebrated author that we cannot do better than repeat his very words. "A bird," ſays he, "not ſo big as the end of one's little "finger, would probably be ſuppoſed but a "creature of imagination, were it not ſeen in "infinite numbers, and as frequent as butter-"flies in a ſummer's day, ſporting in the fields

" of America, from flower to flower, and ex-
" tracting their ſweets with his little bill.

" The ſmalleſt humming bird is about the
" ſize of an hazel nut. The feathers on its
" wings and tail are black; but thoſe on its
" body, and under its wings, are of a greeniſh
" brown, with a fine red caſt or gloſs, which
" no ſilk or velvet can imitate. It has a ſmall
" creſt on its head, green at the bottom, and,
" as it were, gilded at the top, and which
" ſparkles in the ſun like a little ſtar in the
" middle of its forehead. The bill is black,
" ſtraight, ſlender, and of the length of a
" ſmall pin. The larger humming bird is
" near half as big as the common wren, and
" without a creſt on its head; but, to make
" amends, it is covered, from the throat half
" way down the belly, with changeable crim-
" ſon coloured feathers, that, in different
" light, change to a variety of beautiful co-
" lours, much like an opal. The heads of
" both are ſmall, with very little round eyes,
" as black as jet.

" It is inconceivable how much theſe add
" to the high finiſhing and beauty of a rich
" luxurious weſtern landſcape. As ſoon as
" the ſun is riſen, the humming-birds, of dif-
" ferent

" ferent kinds, are ſeen fluttering about the " flowers, without ever lighting upon them. " Their wings are in ſuch rapid motion, that " it is impoſſible to diſcern their colours, ex- " cept by their glittering. The are never " ſtill, but continually in motion, viſiting " flower after flower, and extracting its honey " as if with a kiſs. For this purpoſe they are " furniſhed with a forky tongue, that enters " the cup of the flower and extracts its nec- " tared tribute. Upon this alone they ſubſiſt. " The rapid motion of their wings brings out " an humming ſound, from whence they have " their name; for whatever divides the air " ſwiftly, muſt thus produce a murmur.

" The neſts of theſe birds are not leſs curi- " ous than the reſt; they are ſuſpended in " the air, at the point of the twigs of an " orange, a pomegranate, or a citron-tree: " ſometimes even in houſes, if they find a ſmall " and convenient twig for the purpoſe. The " female is the architect, while the male goes " in queſt of materials; ſuch as cotton, fine " moſs, and the fibres of vegetables. Of theſe " materials a neſt is compoſed, of about the " ſize of an hen's egg cut in two, admirably " contrived, and warmly lined with cotton.

" They lay two eggs at a time, and never more,
" about the ſize of ſmall peas, and as white as
" ſnow, with here and there a yellow ſpeck.
" The male and the female ſit upon the neſt
" by turns; but the female takes to herſelf the
" greateſt ſhare. She ſeldom quits the neſt,
" except a few minutes in the morning and
" evening, when the dew is upon the flowers,
" and their honey in perfection. During this
" ſhort interval, the male takes her place; for,
" as the egg is ſo ſmall, the expoſing it ever
" ſo ſhort a time to the weather, would be apt
" to injure its contents, the ſurface expoſed
" being ſo great in compariſon to the bulk.
" The time of incubation continues twelve
" days; at the end of which the young ones
" appear, much about the ſize of a blue-bottle
" fly. They are at firſt bare; by degrees they
" are covered with down, and at laſt, feathers
" ſucceed, but leſs beautiful at firſt than thoſe
" of the old ones.

' Father Labat's companion, in the miſſion
' to America, found the neſt of an humming-
' bird, in a ſhed that was near the dwelling-
' houſe, and took it in at a time when the young
' ones were about fifteen or twenty days old;
' he then placed them in a cage at his chamber
' window,

'window, to be amuſed by their ſportive flut-
'terings; but he was ſoon ſurpriſed to ſee the
'old ones, that came and fed their brood re-
'gularly every hour in the day. By theſe
'means they themſelves ſoon grew ſo tame,
'that they ſeldom quitted the chamber; but,
'without any conſtraint, came to live with their
'young ones. All four have frequently come
'to perch upon their maſter's hand, chirruping
'as if they had been at liberty abroad. He fed
'them with a very fine clear paſte, made of
'wine, biſcuit, and ſugar, they thruſt their
'tongues into this paſte, till they were ſatiſ-
'fied, and then fluttered and chirruped about
'the room. I never beheld any thing more
'agreeable, continues he, than this lovely lit-
'tle family that had taken poſſeſſion of my
'companion's chamber, and that flew out and
'in juſt as they thought proper; but were ever
'attentive to the voice of their maſter when he
'called them. In this manner they lived with
'him for above ſix months; but at a time
'when he expected to ſee a new colony form-
'ed, he unfortunately forgot to tie up their
'cage to the ceiling at night, to preſerve them
'from the rats, and he found they were de-
'voured in the morning.'

" Theſe

" Theſe birds, on the continent of America, " continue to flutter the year round; as their " food, which is the honey of flowers, never " forſakes them in thoſe warm latitudes where " they are found. But it is otherwiſe in the " iſlands of the Antilles, where, when the " winter ſeaſon approaches, they retire, and as " ſome ſay, continue in a torpid ſtate during " the ſeverity of that ſeaſon. At Surinam " and Jamaica, where they conſtantly have " flowers, theſe beautiful birds are never " known to diſappear.

" It is a doubt whether or not theſe birds " have a continued note in ſinging. All " travellers agree, that, beſide the humming " noiſe produced by th ir wings, they have " a little interrupted chirrup; but Labat aſ- " ſerts, that they have a moſt pleaſing melan- " choly melody in their voices, though ſmall " and proportioned to the organs which pro- " duce it. It is very probable, that, in dif- " ferent places, their notes are alſo different; " and, as there are ſome that continue torpid " all the winter, there may likewiſe be ſome " with agreeable voices, though the reſt may " in general be ſilent.

" The

"The Indians formerly made great uſe "of this pretty bird's plumage, in adorning "their belts and head-dreſs.

"The children take them in the fields "upon rings ſmeared with bird-lime, in the "following manner; they approach the place "where the birds are flying, and twirling their "rings in the air, ſo allure them, either by the "colour or the ſound, that the ſimple little "creature comes to reſt upon the ring, and "is ſeized. They are then inſtantly killed "and gutted, and hung up in the chimney "to dry. Thoſe who take greater care, dry "them in a ſtove, which is not ſo likely "to injure the plumage as the foregoing me-"thod.

"Their beautiful feathers were once the "ornament of the higheſt rank of ſavage no-"bility; but at preſent, they take the bird "rather for the purpoſe of ſelling it as a cu-"rioſity to the Europeans, than that of orna-"ment for themſelves. All the taſte for ſa-"vage finery is wearing out faſt, even among "the Americans. They now begin to adopt, "if not the dreſſes of Europe, at leaſt the "materials of which they are compoſed.—

The

" The wandering warrior is far from thinking
" himſelf fine at preſent with his bow and
" his feathered crown; his ambition reaches
" to higher ornaments; a gun, a blue ſhirt, and
" a blanket."

Chaffinch. *Canary Bird.*

Virginian Nightingale. *Green Finch.*

THE CANARY BIRD.

WE have now come to thoſe whom Willoughby has arranged under the thick bills, at the head of which we ſhall place the Canary bird, both from its being ſo univerſally known and admired, and becauſe in its hiſtory is contained the peculiarities belonging to the whole tribe. Our celebrated original, Buffon, whom we feel a pleaſure of following on every occaſion, has given a pretty long account of this bird; he ſays, "If the nightingale is the chantreſs of the woods, the canary-bird is the muſician of the chamber; the firſt owes all to nature; the ſecond derives ſomething from our arts. With leſs ſtrength of organ, leſs compaſs of voice, and leſs variety of note, the canary-bird has a better ear, greater facility of imitation, and more memory; and as the difference of genius, eſpecially among the lower animals, depends in a great meaſure on the dif-

ference that exiſts among them with regard to the perfection of their ſenſes, the Canary bird, whoſe organ of hearing is more attentive, more ſuſceptible of receiving and retaining foreign impreſſions, becomes accordingly more ſocial, more tame, and more familiar; it is capable of gratitude, and even of attachment; its careſſes are endearing, its little humours are innocent, and its anger neither hurts nor offends. Its natural habits likewiſe attach it to us the more; it eats ſeeds like our other domeſtic birds: it is more eaſily bred than the nightingale, which lives on fleſh or on inſects, and which can be reared only with prepared food. Its education is more eaſy and more ſucceſsful; we breed it with pleaſure, becauſe we are able to inſtruct it; it leaves the melody of its natural note to liſten to the harmony of our voices and inſtruments; it applauds, it accompanies us, and repays the pleaſures it receives with intereſt. The nightingale, more proud of its talent, ſeems willing to preſerve it in all its purity; at leaſt, it appears very little to value ours; and it is with the greateſt difficulty it can be taught to repeat any of our airs. The Canary can ſpeak and whiſtle; the nightingale deſpiſes our words as well

well as our ſong, and never fails to return to the warbling of its own wild wood-notes. Its pipe is a maſter piece of nature which human art can neither alter nor improve; that of the Canary bird is a model of more pliant materials, which we can mould at pleaſure. This laſt, therefore, contributes in a much greater degree to the comforts of ſociety; it ſings at all ſeaſons; it chears us in the dulleſt weather, and even adds to our happineſs; for it amuſes the young and delights the recluſe, it charms the tedioufneſs of the cloiſter, and exhilarates the ſoul of the innocent and the captive; its little amours, which we can contemplate while we make it breed in our cages, have a thouſand times rekindled the dying flame of love in hearts where it ſeemed to have been extinguiſhed. Is not this doing as much good as our vultures do harm?

The happy climate of the Canary iſlands ſeems to be the native place of this charming bird, at leaſt it ſeems there to attain its higheſt degree of perfection; for we know that there is in Italy a ſpecies much ſmaller than that of the Canaries, and in Provence another almoſt as large: both of theſe are wilder, and may be conſidered as the ſtocks of ſome tamed race.

Theſe three birds will breed in a ſtate of captivity; but in their native regions they ſeem to propagate without intermixture. They therefore form three permanent varieties, which it is proper to diſtinguiſh by three different names, that they may not be confounded. The large one was called Cinit or Cini in the days of Belon, and in Provence it retains the name of Cini or Cigni to this day. The leaſt one is called Venturon in Italy.

The Venturon is found not only in Italy, but in Greece, in Turkey, in Auſtria, in Provence, in Languedoc, in Catalonia, and probably in all the climates of that temperature. There are, however, certain years in which it is very rare in our ſouthern provinces, particularly at Marſeilles. Its ſong is agreeable and varied; the female is inferior to the male both in ſong and plumage. The form, colour, voice, and food, of the Venturon and Canary-bird, are nearly the ſame, only the Venturon is ſmaller, and its notes are neither ſo fine nor ſo clear.

The Cini of Provence is larger than the Venturon, and has a louder note: it is remarkable for the brightneſs of its colours, and for the ſtrength and variety of its ſong. The female is ſomewhat larger than the male, has leſs yellow in

in its plumage, does not ſing ſo well, or rather anſwers him as it were only by monoſyllables. This bird feeds on the ſmalleſt ſeeds he can find in the fields; he lives long in a cage, and ſeems to delight in being placed near the goldfinch: he liſtens and borrows ſome of the other's notes, which he incorporates with his own ſong. It is found not only in Provence, but in Dauphiny, at Geneva, at Switzerland, Germany, Italy, and Spain. It is the bird known in Burgundy by the name of the Canary. It builds upon the oſiers planted along the banks of the rivers; and its neſt is formed of hair within and moſs without. It is pretty common in the environs of Marſeilles, and in the ſouthern provinces of France, but rare in the northern. M. Łottinger ſays, that in Lorraine it is a bird of paſſage.

The prevailing colour of the Venturon, as of the Cini, is yellowiſh green on the upper part of the body, and greeniſh yellow on the belly; but the Cini, which is larger than the Venturon, likewiſe differs from it in having brown ſpots, which are longitudinal on the upper part of the body, and waved on the under; while in our climates the ordinary colour of the

Canary-

Canary-bird is a uniform citron yellow over the whole body, even on the belly. This, however, is to be underſtood only of the extremities of the feathers, all the other parts of them are white. The female is of a paler yellow than the male. But this citron colour, inclining more or leſs to white, which the Canary-bird wears in our climate, is not its colour in its native place, and it varies according to the temperature of the country it inhabits. "I have obſerved, (ſays Mr. Adanſon) that the Canary-bird which becomes white in France, is at Teneriffe almoſt as grey as a linnet: a change proceeding I ſuppoſe from the coldneſs of the climate." The colour may alter likewiſe from diverſity of food, from captivity, and eſpecially from intermixture with other ſpecies. At the beginning of this century, bird-fanciers reckoned, in the ſingle ſpecies of the Canary-bird, no leſs than twenty-nine varieties, all ſo diſtinguiſhable as to be eaſily pointed out. The original ſtock of theſe twenty-nine varieties, is the common grey finch of the Canary iſlands. All thoſe that are of other uniform colours have received them from difference of climate: thoſe with red eyes are generally more or leſs inclined

inclined to abſolute whiteneſs, and thoſe with different colours are varieties rather fictitious than natural.

Beſides theſe differences, which appear to be the firſt variations from the pure ſtock of the Canary iſlands when tranſported into other countries; and beſides ſome new races which have appeared ſince, there are other varieties ſtill more apparent, ariſing from a mixture of the Canary-bird with the Venturon and Cini; for theſe birds may not only be made to pair and breed, but their young, which are generally conſidered as mules and ſterile, are notwithſtanding mongrels that are capable of propagating their race. It is the ſame in the junction of the Canary-bird with the ſiſkin, the gold-finch, the linnet, the yellow-hammer, the chaffinch; it is even ſaid that it will produce with the ſparrow. Theſe ſpecies of birds, although very different, and to appearance very remote from that of the Canary-bird, will, notwithſtanding, unite with it and breed, if proper care and precaution be uſed in pairing them. The firſt thing neceſſary is to ſeparate the Canary-birds from all thoſe of their own ſpecies; and the ſecond is, to employ the female rather than the male. I have been aſſured that the

hen

hen Canary-bird will produce with all the above mentioned birds; but it is not equally certain that the cock will unite with the females of thoſe birds. The ſiſkin and the gold-finch are the only ones that ſeem to have their fertility with the cock Canary-bird authenticated. The following was written to me on the ſubject by a friend of mine, a man of experience and probity:

'I have theſe thirty years amuſed myſelf in rearing a number of ſmall birds, and I have particularly attended to the method of breeding them; it is therefore from repeated experience and obſervation that I am enabled to aſſert the following facts: When a perſon wiſhes to pair the Canary-bird with the gold-finch, he muſt take young gold-finches, of ten or twelve days old, from the neſt, and put them in a neſt with Canaries of the ſame age. He muſt feed them together, and leave them in the ſame cage, accuſtoming the gold-finch to the ſame food with the Canary-bird. It is uſual to put a cock gold-finch to a hen Canary-bird, as they pair much more eaſily, and proſper better than when a hen gold-finch and cock Canary-bird are aſſociated. It muſt however be obſerved, that the brood in the firſt caſe is later, becauſe the cock

cock gold-finch does not pair ſo quickly as the cock Canary. But when the female gold-finch is put to a male Canary-bird, the pairing takes place much ſooner. To ſucceed, a male Canary-bird is never to be put into a cage where there are females of its own ſpecies, for then he will prefer theſe to female gold-finches.

'With regard to the union of the male Canary with the female ſiſkin, I can vouch that it proſpers exceedingly well. I have had in my aviary theſe nine years, a female ſiſkin which never failed to have three broods the firſt five years; and all theſe proſpered; for the laſt four years ſhe has had only two broods. I have other birds of the ſame ſpecies of the ſiſkin, which, without having been bred up together, or placed apart, have paired with Canary-birds. The male or female ſiſkin is merely put into a room with a good number of thoſe birds; they will ſoon be coupling at the ſame time with other Canaries; while the gold-finch only couples with the Canary-bird when in a cage; and then too only when there is no bird there of its own ſpecies. The ſiſkin lives as long as the Canary-bird, it accuſtoms itſelf to the

ſame food with leſs repugnance than the gold-finch.

'I have alſo put linnets and Canary-birds together: but they will ſeldom breed except the cock linnet be put with the hen Canary-bird; the female linnet will not even make a neſt, but drops a few eggs in the cage, which are generally addle. I know this by experience, as I have often made the hen Canary-bird ſit on them without effect.

'The chaffinch and yellow-hammer are with great difficulty made to pair with the Canary-bird. I left a female yellow hammer with a male Canary for three years, the hen laid only addle eggs: it is the ſame with the female chaffinch; but the cock chaffinch and yellow-hammer with the hen Canary-bird have produced ſome fertile eggs.'

It follows from theſe facts, and ſome others which I have collected, that among all theſe birds the ſiſkin alone will breed with the Canary-bird equally well, whether male or female; the hen Canary-bird produces, likewiſe, eaſily enough with the male gold-finch; not quite ſo eaſily with the male linnet; and, laſtly, it will breed, though more difficultly, with the

the males of the chaffinch, the yellow-hammer and ſparrow, while the male Canary is incapable of fecundating the females of any of theſe laſt. Nature is therefore more ambiguous and leſs conſtant, and the mould of the ſpecies leſs firm, in the female than in the male; the latter is the true model; its ſtructure is ſtronger than that of the female, which is ſubject to various modifications and alterations by a mixture with other ſpecies.

The firſt variety which ſeems to conſtitute two diſtinct races in the ſpecies of the Canary-bird is formed of the variegated and the plain, (or the ſpangled and gay birds, as they are called in London.) The white are never variegated, neither are the citron coloured: but when theſe laſt have attained the age of four or five years, the extremities of the wings and tail become white. The grey are not of an uniform colour; on the ſame bird there are feathers more or leſs grey; and in many of theſe birds, the grey is lighter or darker, more inclined to the brown or the black. The agates are of an uniform colour, but there are ſome where the agate colour is lighter or darker. Thoſe inclining to a cream colour are ſtill more uniform; the yellow is conſtant both in the

ſame bird, and in the different individuals. In the variegated, or ſpangled birds, thoſe that are of a jonquil yellow are tinged with black, and there is generally a ſpot of black on the head. There are variegated individuals with all the ſimple colours we have mentioned, but thoſe of the jonquil colour are only variegated with black.

When individuals of an uniform colour are paired together, their young are of the ſame colour: a cock and hen that are grey generally produce grey birds: but if a male grey is put to a female white, or a male white to a female grey, the brood will be more beautiful than the parents; and as the numbers that may be croſſed by ſuch combinations are inexhauſtible, we can at all times produce varieties in ſhade and tint that have not before appeared. The mixtures that may be made of the ſpangled birds with thoſe of an uniform colour increaſe ſtill more the number of combinations that may be produced; and thus varieties in the ſpecies may be multiplied to infinity. It likewiſe oftenhappens, that without the aſſiſtance of the fancy-birds, we have pretty little variegated birds which owe their beauty to the mixture of the different colours in their parents or their progenitors,

genitors, ſome of which, either on their father or mother's ſide, may have been variegated.

With regard to the mixture of other ſpecies with the Canary-bird, I have collected the following obſervations: Of the whole ſpecies, the Cini, or green Canary, has the ſtrongeſt pipe; it is the moſt vigorous and moſt ardent for propagation: it may ſuffice for three females; it feeds them on the neſt as it does the young. The ſiſkin and the gold-finch are neither ſo vigorous nor ſo attentive, and are content with a ſingle female Canary-bird.

The birds that come from the junction of the cini, the ſiſkin, and the gold-finch, with a hen Canary-bird, are generally ſtronger than thoſe from a cock and hen Canary-bird. They ſing longer, their voice is more ſonorous and ſtrong, but they are taught with difficulty; the greater part always whiſtle imperfectly, and one is ſeldom to be found which can repeat a ſingle air without miſſing.

When we would wiſh to procure birds from a mixture of the gold-finch with a hen Canary-bird, the former muſt be two years old, and the latter one; becauſe the Canary-bird comes ſooner to maturity than the gold-finch, and in general they ſucceed beſt when they have been bred

bred up together. This, however, is not abſolutely neceſſary, and the author of the Treatiſe on Canary-birds is miſtaken when he cautions us againſt uſing a hen that has formerly hatched with a cock of its own ſpecies, as if that would prevent her from receiving the male of another ſpecies. 'I happened, (ſays Father Bougot) to put four males to eight female Canary-birds; ſome bad ſeed poiſoned three of the males, and all the females loſt their firſt eggs; I reſolved to ſubſtitute three male goldfinches taken in a trap in place of the three dead Canaries, and I put them into the cage about the beginning of May. Towards the end of July I had two neſts of mongrels which ſucceeded to admiration; and the following year I had three broods with each goldfinch and hen Canary-bird. Theſe laſt in general do not breed with the goldfinch till they are from a year to four years old; while with their own ſpecies they continue to hatch for nine or ten years. The common variegated female alone will breed with the gold-finch beyond her fourth year. A gold-finch muſt never be let looſe in an aviary, for he deſtroys the neſt, and breaks the eggs of the other birds.' We ſee then that hen Canary-birds, though accuſtomed

tomed to the males of their own ſpecies, will yield to the careſſes of the gold-finch, and will breed with theſe birds ſucceſsfully. Their union with theſe is even as fruitful as with their own natural males, ſince they lay three times in the year with the gold-finch: it is not ſo in the union of the male linnet with the hen Canary-bird; in this caſe there is only one brood, and very ſeldom two, in the year.

The baſtard birds which proceed from the Canary and the ſiſkin, gold-finch, &c. are by no means ſterile; but mongrels that can pair and propagate, not only with their races by father and mother, but with themſelves, and produce offspring that can alſo pair and perpetuate their varieties. But it muſt be owned, that the produce of theſe mongrels is not ſo certain nor ſo numerous by any means as in the pure ſpecies: they ſeldom hatch more than once in a year, and often lay eggs that are addle. The ſucceſsful production depends on many little circumſtances which cannot be diſcovered, far leſs pointed out. It is ſaid, that among theſe mules there are always many more males than females. 'A female Canary-bird and a gold-finch, (ſays Father Bougot), produced in the ſame year, at three hatchings, nineteen eggs

that

that were all fertile; among the nineteen there were only three females, the other ſixteen were males.' It is to be wiſhed that this fact could be aſcertained by repeated obſervations. It remains therefore to determine by experiment (and this will not be difficult) how many males and how many females are produced in the pure ſpecies of the Canary-bird, and then to obſerve if the number of males is greater in the mongrels that proceed from a cock gold-finch and a female Canary-bird. The reaſon that inclines me to believe this is, that in general the male has more influence than the female on the ſtrength and quality of the different races. Beſides, thoſe mongrel birds which are ſtronger, which have a more piercing note, and a longer breath than Canaries of the pure kind, likewiſe live longer. But there is one conſtant obſervation which relates to both; and that is, the oftener they hatch, the more they abridge the period of their lives. A cock Canary-bird reared alone, and deprived of any intercourſe with a hen, generally lives thirteen or fourteen years; a mongrel proceeding from the gold-finch in the ſame circumſtances, will live eighteen or even nineteen years. A mongrel from the ſiſkin will live fifteen or ſixteen years;

years; while the cock Canary-bird, that has been accuſtomed to one or more females, lives only ten or eleven years, and the mongrel from the gold-finch fourteen or fifteen years. It is neceſſary, moreover, to ſeparate them from the females immediately after the hatching ſeaſon, that is, from the month of Auguſt to March, otherwiſe their paſſion ſo exhauſts them, that their lives are ſtill ſhorter by two or three years.

In the lower animals, as well as in man, even in our ſmall birds, the diverſity of character, or if you will, of moral qualities, often injures the conſonance of phyſical qualities. If any thing could prove that the diſpoſition is a good or bad impreſſion given by nature, which education cannot alter, it would be the inſtance of our Canary-birds. 'Almoſt every one of them, ſays Mr. Hervieux, differs from another in diſpoſition. There are ſome cocks that are always melancholy, and even ſullen, ſinging ſeldom, and then in a diſmal ſtrain; they are long in learning, and learn at laſt but imperfectly what you teach them, and the little they know they very ſoon forget. They are often ſo uncleanly, that their feet and tail are generally dirty; they do not pleaſe the female, whom they

never regale with their ſong, even when her young firſt appear, though indeed theſe are ſeldom much better than their father. There are others ſo wicked that they kill the hen they are put to, and there is no other way of taming them than by giving them two females, who join for their common defence; and when they have once vanquiſhed by force they conquer afterwards by love. There are others ſo barbarous as to break and eat the eggs when the hen has laid them; or if this unnatural father allows her to hatch, the young are hardly excluded from the ſhell, than he ſeizes them with his bill, drags them from the neſt and kills them. Some are ſo wild, ſavage, and ungovernable, that they will allow themſelves neither to be touched nor careſſed; they muſt be left at liberty, and cannot be treated like the others: if they are meddled with in the leaſt they will not breed, their eggs muſt not be touched or taken away; and they will not hatch if they are not ſuffered to pair and build as they pleaſe. Laſtly, there are ſome of an indolent diſpoſition; ſuch, for example, are the grey ones; theſe never build, and the perſon that attends them muſt make a neſt for them. All theſe tempers are very diſtinct and very different

different from that of our favourite Canary-birds, which are always gay, always ſinging, tame, agreeable, good mates, attentive fathers, and of ſo gentle a diſpoſition and ſo happy a temper, that they are ſuſceptible of every good impreſſion, and endowed with the beſt inclinations: they charm inceſſantly the hen with their ſong; they ſoothe her in the diſtreſsful aſſiduity of hatching; they invite her to quit her place to them, and actually ſit on the eggs ſeveral hours every day; they join with her in feeding the young; and, laſtly, they are docile, and learn whatever we chuſe to teach them. It is by theſe alone that we muſt form an opinion of the ſpecies; and I have only mentioned the others, to demonſtrate that the temper and diſpoſition, even in animals, proceed from nature, and not from education.

This bad diſpoſition, which makes them break their eggs and kill the neſtlings, often proceed from their temperament and from the impetuoſity of their love; it is to enjoy the female that they drive her from the neſt and deſtroy the tender objects of her affection. Accordingly, the beſt means of making theſe birds hatch is not to temperate them, or to put them in different cages. It is better to put

them into a room well expoſed to the ſun, and to the eaſt, in winter, where there are many hens and few cocks: here they enjoy themſelves more, and multiply better: when a hen ſits, the cock finds him another mate, and does not diſturb her. Beſides, the cocks have many quarrels among themſelves from jealouſy; and when they ſee any one ſo ardent as to torment the female, and attempting to break the eggs, they beat him ſufficiently to deaden his deſires.

When they are about to build, you muſt furniſh them with lint, the hair of oxen, or ſtags, which has not been employed in other uſes, with moſs, with very ſmall and dry ſtraw. Gold-finches and ſiſkins, if put with hen Canary-birds when mule birds are wanted, prefer ſmall ſtraw and moſs, but the Canary-birds like better to uſe the hair and lint: theſe muſt be cut very ſmall, for fear the threads ſhould entangle the feet of the hen, and cauſe her to pull the eggs from the neſt as ſhe riſes from it.

In feeding them, you muſt place in the room a hopper pierced all round, ſo as to admit their heads, filled with a portion of the following compoſition: three quarts of rape ſeed, two of oats,

oats, two of millet and of hemp-ſeed: every twelve or thirteen days the hopper is to be filled, taking care that the ſeeds are clean and well winnowed. This food is proper as long as they have only eggs; but the evening before the young are to be excluded, they muſt have a dry cake kneaded without ſalt, which may be left till it is eaten up, and then you may give them eggs boiled hard; a ſingle hard egg if there are but two cocks and two hens, two eggs if there are four cocks and eight hens, and ſo in proportion. They muſt have no green thing while they are breeding, which would weaken the young too much; but in order to vary their food a little, and cheer them with a new meſs, give them every third day, on a plate, inſtead of the dry cake, a bit of white bread dipped in water and preſſed with the hand; this bread not being ſo ſubſtantial a food as the cake, will prevent them from growing too fat when hatching: it will likewiſe be proper to give them at the ſame time ſome poppy ſeeds, but only once in two days, for fear of heating them too much: ſugar biſcuits generally produces this effect, which is followed with another ſtill more hurtful; for when they are fed on biſcuit, they often lay addle eggs, or bring weak and ſickly young.

young. While they have young, boil their rape-ſeed to deprive it of its acrimony. 'Long experience, ſays Father Bougot, has taught me that this food is that which beſt agrees with them, notwithſtanding what all authors have ſaid who have written expreſsly on the ſubject.'

After the eggs are laid, give them plantain and lettuce ſeed to purge them, taking away however the young, for this food would weaken them, and muſt be given only for two days to the parent birds. When you wiſh to rear Canary-birds with the ſtick, you muſt not, according to the directions of moſt bird-breeders, leave them with the mother to the eleventh or twelfth day; it is better to take away the young after the eighth day: take them away in the neſt and leave nothing but the caſe. The food of the neſtlings muſt be previouſly prepared; it is a paſte compoſed of boiled rape-ſeed, a yoke of an egg, and crumb of the cake mixed and kneaded with a little water, which is to be given them every two hours. This paſte muſt not be too liquid; and for fear of its growing ſour, it muſt be renewed every day till the young can feed themſelves.

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The brood of birds in a ſtate of captivity is not ſo conſtant, but is perhaps more numerous than it would probably be in a ſtate of native freedom; for there are hens who will hatch four, and even five times a year, laying four, five, ſix, and ſometimes ſeven eggs at a time; in general, they have three broods, and the moulting prevents their having more. There are hens, however, that hatch while they moult, provided they begin to ſit before that time. Birds of the ſame neſt do not all begin to moult at the ſame time. The weakeſt are the firſt that undergo that change; the ſtrongeſt are often a month later. The moulting of jonquil canary-birds is more tedious and generally more fatal than that of the others. The hens of theſe jonquil birds lay only three times with three eggs each time; the light-coloured ones both cock and hen, are too delicate, and their brood ſeldom proſpers. The cream-coloured have ſome repugnance at pairing with one another; in a large aviary the male generally chuſes one of a different colour. In general, the white go through the whole proceſs with equal ſucceſs; they pair, build and hatch as well, and better than any of the others, and the

the white ſpangled birds are likewiſe the ſtrongeſt of all.

Notwithſtanding theſe differences in the diſpoſition, temperature, and fertility of theſe birds, the time of incubation in all is the ſame; all of them ſit thirteen days, and when it happens a day leſs or more, it is owing to ſome accidental circumſtance; cold retards the excluſion of the young, and heat accelerates it. Accordingly, it ſometimes happens that the firſt ſitting in April, laſts thirteen days and a half, or fourteen days, if the air is at that time cold; on the contrary, the third hatching, which happens during the great heats of July or Auguſt, laſts only twelve days or twelve days and a half. The bad eggs ought to be ſeparated from the good; but in order to know them certainly, you ſhould wait till they have been ſat upon for eight or nine days; then take each egg by the two ends for fear of breaking them, and hold them againſt the ſun, or a lighted candle; thoſe that are clear muſt be rejected; it would only fatigue the hen to leave them with her. In thus detaching the clear eggs, of three neſts we may only make two; and the third hen being at liberty will proceed again to lay. It is a practice

a practice much recommended by bird-fanciers to take away the eggs as the hen lays them, ſubſtituting an ivory one in their place, that the whole may be hatched in one day. When the laſt egg is laid, the ivory ones are removed and the others replaced. In general the time of laying is in the morning, about ſix or ſeven o'clock; it is ſaid that when this happens an hour later, it is owing to the hen's being ſick; the eggs being thus laid in regular ſucceſſion, it is eaſy to take them away the moment they are ſaid. However, this practice is more adapted to our own convenience than to that of the bird, and is contrary to the economy of nature; it makes the mother part with a great deal of heat unneceſſarily, and burdens her at once with five or ſix young, which incommode her more than they give her pleaſure; while, when ſhe ſees them come ſucceſſively one after the other, her pleaſures are multiplied, and her ſtrength and courage ſupported; accordingly, very intelligent bird-fanciers have aſſured me, that the natural way has always ſucceeded better with them than the above-mentioned practice.

Indeed, I muſt ſay, that in general, too ſubtle practices, and the ſcrupulous cares which our

writers adviſe us to beſtow on the rearing of birds, are more hurtful than uſeful; we muſt, as much as poſſible imitate Nature in every thing. In their native ſpot, Canary-birds haunt the banks of little rivulets, or of moiſt ravines; we muſt not, therefore, ſuffer them to want water, either to drink or bathe in. As they are natives of a very mild climate, we muſt defend them from the rigour of winter; but as they ſeem now long naturaliſed with us they are accuſtomed to our cold weather, for we may keep them in a room without fire, and even with the window open, guarded, however, with a net-work to prevent their eſcape. I have known many bird-fanciers who have aſſured me, that by treating them thus hardily, they loſe fewer than when they are kept in warm rooms. It is the ſame with regard to their food; it may be rendered more ſimple, and perhaps the birds will be the better for it. One circumſtance it is particularly neceſſary to attend to, and that is, to beware of pairing them too ſoon in the ſeaſon; in general, it is the cuſtom to permit their union towards the 20th or 25th of March, whereas the 12th or 15th of April is a more proper time; for when they are put together while the weather is ſtill cold, they grow indif-

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ferent for one another, and, if the hen happens to lay eggs, ſhe leaves them if the weather does not grow warm; thus we loſe a whole hatching by ſeeking to have it too early.

The young birds are different from the old ones, not only in colour, but in other qualities. A young Canary-bird of the year, obſerved on the 13th of September, 1772, had the head, the neck, the back, and the quill-feathers blackiſh, except the four firſt feathers of the right wing, which were whitiſh; the rump, the coverts of the wings, the tail, which was ſtill not quite formed, and the under part of the body, were alſo of a whitiſh colour, and there were not as yet any feathers on the belly from the *ſternum* to the *anus*. This young bird had its lower mandible entering within the upper, which was pretty thick, and a little hooked. As the bird advances in age, the diſpoſition and ſhades of the colour change; the old are diſtinguiſhed from the young birds by ſtrength, colour, and ſong. The old ones have always the ſtrongeſt and moſt vivid colours, their feet are rougher, inclining to black if they are of the grey race; and the nails are thicker and longer than thoſe of the young. The female ſometimes ſo much reſembles the male, that it is not eaſy to diſtin-

guiſh the difference at firſt ſight; however, the colours of the male are always the brighteſt, his head a little thick and longer, the temples more of an orange colour, and under the bill a flame-coloured yellow, which deſcends lower than in the female; his legs are alſo longer, and he begins to record almoſt as ſoon as he can feed himſelf. It is true, that there are hens which likewiſe begin thus early: but taking all theſe marks together, we will be at no loſs to diſtinguiſh, even before the firſt moulting, the cock from the hen. After that time there is no more uncertainty, for the cock declares himſelf by his ſong.

Every quick exertion of the voice is in animals a ſtrong indication of paſſion: and as love of all internal motions, is that which agitates them oftener, and tranſports them moſt powerfully, they do not fail to expreſs its ardour. Birds by their ſong, the bull by its lowing, the horſe by neighing, the bear by growling, all announce one and the ſame deſire. The ardour of this deſire is by no means ſo ſtrong nor ſo conſpicuous in the female as it is in the male, and accordingly ſhe expreſſes it but ſeldom by her voice; that of the hen Canary-bird is nothing more than a gentle note of tender

ſatisfaction,

ſatisfaction, a ſign of conſent which does not eſcape her till ſhe has long liſtened to, and ſuffered herſelf to be won by the ardent prayer of the male, who exerts himſelf to inſpire her with the ſame paſſion which he feels. But when her deſires are once excited, there is a neceſſity for gratifying them, otherwiſe ſhe often falls ſick and dies.

It is ſeldom that Canary-birds brought up in a chamber, fall ſick before hatching; ſometimes a few cocks over eat themſelves and die; if the hen grows ſick while ſhe is ſetting, her eggs muſt be taken away and given to another; for though ſhe ſhould get better ſoon, ſhe will not return to her neſt. The firſt ſyſtem of ſickneſs, eſpecially in the cock, is melancholy; whenever he is obſerved to loſe his natural gaiety, he muſt be put in a ſeparate cage, and placed in the ſun in the ſame room with the hen. If his feathers appear rough, you muſt look if he has not a pimple above the tail; when the ſuppuration is fit to be opened, the bird often performs it himſelf with his bill; but if it goes on too ſlowly, it muſt be opened with a large needle, and the wound anointed with ſaliva, without mixing any ſalt with it, which would ſmart it too much. The next day, you may let him looſe,

looſe, and obſerve, by his behaviour and eagerneſs for the hen, whether he is cured or not. If not, you muſt take him again, and with a ſmall quill blow a little white wine under his wings, put him in the ſun, and next day when you let him looſe judge as before of the ſtate of his health; if melancholy and diſguſt for the female continue after theſe remedies, all hope of cure is vain; he muſt be put into a ſeparate cage, and another male given to the hen ſimilar to the one ſhe has loſt, or if that cannot be, one of the ſame variety with herſelf. There is generally more ſympathy between thoſe which reſemble each other, except in the caſe of cream coloured varieties which prefer the females of any other colour. But care muſt be taken that the new male be not a novice, but already acquainted with the duties of a parent. When the female falls ſick ſhe muſt have the ſame treatment as the male.

The moſt general cauſe of ſickneſs is too abundant, or too rich food; when theſe birds are made to breed in a cage or cloſet, they often eat too much, or ſelect the ſucculent food deſigned for the young; hence the conſequences are either repletion or inflammation. By keeping them in a room this inconvenience is in a great

great meaſure prevented; becauſe being among a great number, they hinder one another from eating to exceſs. A cock who eats for a long time is ſure to be beaten by the other males; and the ſame is the caſe with the hens; theſe quarrels give them exerciſe, temperance, and occupation from neceſſity; it is chiefly on this account that they are ſeldom or never ſickly in a chamber during the breeding time; it is only after hatching that infirmities and diſeaſes attack them. The greater part have the pimple we mentioned above, and afterwards all of them are ſubject to moulting. Some ſupport pretty well this change of ſtate, and do not fail to ſing a ſhort while every day; but moſt of them loſe their voice, and ſome even die. When the hens have attained the age of ſix or ſeven years, many of them die in moulting; the cocks ſupport this ſpecies of diſeaſe more eaſily, and exiſt three or four years longer. However, as moulting is a natural effect rather than an accidental diſeaſe, theſe birds would have no need of remedies, or would find ſuch for themſelves had they been reared by their parents in a ſtate of nature and liberty. But being under reſtraint, fed by us, and made more delicate, moulting, which to birds at freedom is only an indiſpoſition

indiſpoſition, a leſs perfect ſtate of health, becomes to thoſe in captivity, a ſerious and often fatal malady, for which indeed there are but few remedies, (a ſmall piece of iron put in their water is the moſt effectual). It remains only to ſay that moulting is the leſs dangerous, if it happens early, that is, in a good ſeaſon of the year. Young Canary-birds moult early in the year, about ſix weeks after they are hatched; they become melancholy, appear rough, and put their head under the wing. Their down falls in this firſt moulting, and in the ſecond, the following year, the large feathers, even thoſe of the wings and tail, fall likewiſe. The young birds of the laſt brood, which have not been hatched till September, or later, ſuffer accordingly much more in moulting than thoſe which were hatched in the ſpring. Cold weather is very unfriendly to this ſtate, and they would all die were they not kept in a temperate, or rather warm place. While this function is going on, that is for ſix weeks or two months, Nature labours to produce new feathers; and the organic molecules which had been previouſly employed in forming the ſeminal fluids are now engaged in this new production; accordingly, when moulting, birds neither breed nor pair; for the

the ſuperflux of life is wanting, which every being muſt have before it can convey it to others.

The moſt fatal and moſt common diſeaſe that the young Canary birds eſpecially are ſubject to, is that called the ſurfeit, in which their bowels ſeem to deſcend to the extremity of the body. The inteſtines are ſeen through the ſkin, in a ſtate of inflammation, redneſs, and diſtention; the feathers on the part fall off; the bird grows emaciated, gives over eating, though he ſits perpetually beſide his meat, and dies in a few days. The cauſe of this diſeaſe is the too great quantity, or too ſucculent quality of the food. All medicines are fruitleſs; diet alone can ſave a few out of a number of birds thus affected. They muſt be put into ſeparate cages, and nothing given to them but water and lettuce ſeed; this food is cooling and purgative, it tempers the ardour which conſumes them, and ſometimes cauſes evacuations that ſave their lives. In fine, we may obſerve, that this diſeaſe proceeds ſolely from our method of rearing theſe birds, for it is ſeldom that thoſe by the parent birds are ever attacked with it. We ought, therefore, to be particularly cautious of over-feeding them when we bring them up with the ſtick; boiled rape ſeed, a little groundſel, without ſugar or biſcuit,

and in general rather too little than too much food, is the moſt approved method.

When the Canary-bird utters a faint and frequent cry, which ſeems to iſſue from the bottom of his ſtomach, he is ſaid to be aſthmatic; he is alſo ſubject to a ſort of extinction of voice, eſpecially after moulting. The aſthma is cured by adminiſtering plantain-ſeed and hard biſcuit ſoaked in white wine; and the extinction of voice by good food, ſuch as yolks of eggs, mixed with the crumb of bread; and for drink, a priſan of liquorice; that is, water in which liquorice root has been ſteeped and boiled.

Canary-birds are frequently affected with ulcers in the mouth; theſe proceed likewiſe from too abundant, or too ſucculent food, which often produces inflammation in the throat and palate, and muſt be cured by cooling diet, ſuch as lettuce-ſeed with water, in which ſome bruiſed melon-ſeeds have been put.

Theſe birds are likewiſe infeſted with a ſort of lice and the ſcab, owing to the ſlovenly manner in which they are kept. Therefore care ſhould be taken to keep them always very clean, giving them water to bathe in: never putting them into cages of old wood, never covering

theſe

theſe but with new cloth where there have been no moths, and ſifting and waſhing the ſeeds and herbs given them for food. Theſe little cares muſt be beſtowed on them if we would have them neat and healthy; they would be ſo if they were in a ſtate of liberty: but confined and ill ſeen to, they are, like all priſoners, ſubject to the evils of captivity. Of all thoſe we have mentioned, none ſeem to be natural except moulting. There are even ſome of thoſe birds which, in this wretched ſtate of captivity, are never ſick, cuſtom ſeeming to have made it to them a ſecond nature. In general the fault of their temperament is exceſs of heat, and therefore they conſtantly need water. When wild, they are found near rivulets or waſte places; bathing is neceſſary for them at all ſeaſons; for if a plateful of ſnow is put in their cage, they will lie down in it and turn themſelves upon it with ſigns of pleaſure, even in time of the greateſt colds; this fact proves ſufficiently, that it is more noxious than uſeful to keep them in very warm places.

But there is another diſeaſe to which the Canary-bird, as well as others, ſuch as the goldfinch, are ſubject, eſpecially in confinement: I mean the epilepſy. The yellow Canary-birds

are moſt liable to this falling ſickneſs, which ſeizes them in a moment, even when they are ſinging the loudeſt. It is ſaid they ought not to be touched, or taken up when they fall, but that we ought merely to obſerve if they have voided a drop of blood at the bill, in which caſe they will come to themſelves, and recover in a little ſpace their ſenſe and life; that touching them before would make the drop fall too ſoon, and would occaſion their death. I wiſh the truth of this account were well aſcertained, for ſome facts in it appear to me doubtful. This much is certain, that when they ſurvive the firſt fit, they often live as long after as if they had never been attacked by it. I believe, however, that they might all be cured by giving them a ſlight wound in the feet, for in this way parrots are often cured of the epilepſy.

How many evils attend upon ſlavery! In a ſtate of freedom would thoſe birds be aſthmatic, ſcabby, or epileptic? Would they be liable to inflammations, to impoſthumes, to ulcers? And is not the moſt direful of all diſeaſes, that ariſing from ungratified love, common to every being in captivity? Females eſpecially, being more deeply tender, more delicately ſuſceptible, are more ſubject to it than males. It is remarked

marked, that the hen Canary-bird often grows ſickly at the beginning of ſpring, before ſhe has got a mate ; ſhe fades, pines, and dies in a few days. The vain emotions and ungratified deſires which then ſeize her ſuddenly, are the cauſe of her languor, when ſhe hears ſo many males ſinging around her whom ſhe cannot approach. The cock, though the cauſe of the deſire, and the moſt ardent in appearance, reſiſts better than the female the evils of celibacy ; he ſeldom dies of privation, but often of exceſs.

Upon the whole, the phyſical temperament of the hen Canary-bird is like that of the female of other birds. She can lay eggs without any communication with the male, but they are addle, and the heat of incubation corrupts inſtead of vivifying them. It has been obſerved, that hens ſeldom lay eggs if they are totally ſequeſtered, and neither hear nor ſee the male; but when they are excited by the ſight of him, or by his ſong, they lay much more frequently; ſuch effect have objects, even at a diſtance, on the powers of ſentient beings."

Canary-birds are bred in large quantities, both for ſale and amuſement, in Germany, France, and England ; and in each of thoſe countries, they

they have, by care, much improved the breed, beyond thoſe now imported from the natural climate. They are of different colours, yellow, white buff, grey, and green, with endleſs varieties of combination ariſing from the different ſhades of colour in the parent birds. Thoſe brought from Germany are generally variegated, or mottled, and are the leaſt valued, becauſe the heat of the ſtoves, generally uſed to warm the houſes in that country, renders the birds bred there tender and ſhort-lived; German birds ſeldom living above a year or two in this country.

The cock of this kind is highly valued for its ſinging, having a very ſweet note, which it continues for ſome time in one breath, without intermiſſion, and raiſes it higher and higher by degrees, with great variety.

The fore-part of the head, the throat, the pinion of the wing, and rump of the cock, are of a brighter yellow than in the hen; which marks will hold good, let them be of what kind they will: the cock is alſo bigger than the hen, and his carriage is alſo more ſprightly and majeſtic; for he will often extend his neck and head in a very briſk lively manner. The hens do not ſing, or ſo indifferently, it does not deſerve

ſerve the name of ſinging. Whenever the cock ſings, his throat may be obſerved to ſwell and play all the while he is warbling, whereas there is no ſuch motion in the hen.

There are two particular ſorts of Canary-birds known and eſteemed among breeders, beſides ſome varieties under each. Theſe are thoſe birds which are all yellow, and thoſe which are mottled, with a yellow crown; the former, in the breeding ſtile, being called *gay* birds, and the latter ſpangled, or *fancy* birds. The fancy breed are eſteemed the ſtrongeſt, and have the boldeſt ſong. Careleſs breeders often match a gay with a fancy bird, and then the produce, partaking of both kinds, are called *mules*; being foul irregular birds, of no value for feather, though they may prove as good as any, merely for ſinging.

If you propoſe to breed gay birds, chooſe the cock and hen of a clear uniform yellow colour, without being ſpotted with foul feathers; for theſe foulneſſes indicate that the breed has ſome time or other been croſſed.

There are ſeveral ſubſcription ſocieties in London, which raiſe annual premiums for the fineſt birds, and who have a pattern bird beautifully engraved and coloured, as the ſtandard of

of perfection, with his various characters explained in a technical ſtile underneath. The principal teſt of a good fancy bird is the having a clean cap; that is, the crown of his head, defined by a horizontal line at the level of his eyes and beak, is to be of a clean yellow or white, without being broke, or ſpotted with foul feathers: and a ſingle feather of this kind is a drawback from his perfection; though this degree of perfection is ſeldom found. Add to this, that his back, wings, and tail, ought to be as clear from yellow or white feathers. The finer he is mottled on the back, and clearer yellow he is on the belly, the handſomer he will be eſteemed.

Theſe general characters are equally requiſite in the hen as in the cock; beſides which, there is a caſual variety in fancy birds, diſtinguiſhed either as *mealies*, or *junks*; the mealy birds being thoſe whoſe crown and bellies are of a clean white or pale yellow; and the junks, whoſe crown and bellies are of a deep yellow.

The fine ſpangled ſort abovementioned, commonly called French Canary-birds, and the mealy ones, are the beſt to breed with for thoſe who are very curious; becauſe a ſpangled cock with a mealy hen will produce a more regular

ſpangled

ſpangled feather than if the cock and hen were both ſpangled, for then they would breed too high upon the yellow.

THE SISKIN, *or* ABERDUVINE.

OF all granivorous birds, ſays Buffon, the goldfinch is ſuppoſed to be the moſt nearly allied to the ſiſkin; both have the bill elongated and ſlender towards the point; the manners of both are gentle; they are of a docile diſpoſition, and their motions are briſk and lively. Some Naturaliſts, ſtruck with theſe marks of reſemblance, and the great analogy which ſubſiſts between theſe birds in other reſpects,) for they pair and produce fertile offspring,) have conſidered them as two proximate ſpecies of the ſame genus.

The ſiſkin is ſmaller than the gold-finch; his bill is ſhorter in proportion, and his plumage quite different; he has black on his head,

but no red; his throat is brown; the fore-part of the neck, the breaſt, and outward feathers of the tail are yellow, the belly white, with a yellow tinge; the upper part of the body of olive green, ſpotted with black, which becomes yellowiſh at the rump, and ſtill more ſo on the feathers above the tail.

With regard to thoſe internal qualities that more immediately depend on organization or inſtinct, the difference is ſtill greater. The ſiſkin has a ſong peculiar to itſelf, inferior to that of the gold-finch; it is fond of the ſeeds of the adder, which the other will not touch, and it reſigns to the gold-finch thoſe of the thiſtle; it creeps along the branches, and ſuſpends itſelf at their extremities like the tom-tit, ſo that it may be conſidered as an intermediate ſpecies between this latter and the gold-finch. Beſides, it is a bird of paſſage, and in its emigrations flies very high; it is heard before it is ſeen: while the gold-finch continues ſtationary in our climates all the year round, and never flies very high. Laſtly, theſe birds are never found to aſſociate together voluntarily.

The ſiſkin learns to draw water like the gold-finch; it has not leſs docility, and though leſs

leſs active, it has more livelineſs and gaiety; in an aviary it is always the firſt awake, and is the firſt to record and ſet the example to others; but as it has no wiſh to hurt, it is itſelf unſuſpicious, and falls eaſily into ſnares, gins, nets, &c. It is more eaſily tamed than any other bird when taken old; it is only neceſſary for this purpoſe, to preſent it in your hand with better food than it has in its trough, and it will ſoon become as tame as the moſt familiar Canary-bird: it may even be made to come and ſit upon your hand at the ſound of a ſmall bell; you have only to ſound it regularly at firſt every time you give it meat, for the mechanical effects of the aſſociation of ideas take place even in animals. Although the ſiſkin ſeems nice in the choice of its food, yet it eats a great deal, and the ſenſations which depend on luxurious feeding have great influence on it. This however is not its ruling paſſion, or at leaſt it is ſubordinate to a more noble one: in an aviary it always chooſes a friend from amongſt its own ſpecies if it can find one; if not, from ſome other: it takes upon itſelf the charge of feeding this friend like its young, putting the food into the other's bill. It drinks as much as it eats, or at leaſt it drinks very ofter, but ſeldom

bathes; it has been obſerved, that it very ſeldom goes into the water, but ſtands on the rim of the veſſel, dipping its bill and breaſt, without much agitation, except perhaps in great heats.

It is ſaid to build chiefly in mountain foreſts; its neſt is difficult to find; ſo difficult, as to be a received opinion with the vulgar, that it has the art of rendering its neſt inviſible, by means of a certain ſtone: accordingly nobody has given any account of the neſt or manner of laying of theſe birds; though, if we would have an idea of their procedure in thoſe operations which tend to the multiplication of the ſpecies, we have only to make them breed in a room, which they certainly would do; though indeed the experiment has been ſeveral times tried unſucceſsfully: but it is more common and more eaſy to croſs the breed of this race with the Canary-birds: there is a ſympathy ſo marked between theſe two ſpecies, that if a cock-ſiſkin is put into a place where there are many Canary-birds; he goes directly towards them, keeps as near them as poſſible, and they alſo court him with as much eagerneſs; if a cock and hen ſiſkin be let fly in the ſame room with a number of Canary-birds, theſe laſt will pair indifferently with the former, or with thoſe of their own

own ſpecies; but the male ſiſkin is ſometimes left unprovided.

When a cock ſiſkin has paired with a hen Canary-bird, he partakes in all her labours with zeal; he aſſiduouſly helps her in bringing materials for the neſt, and in uſing them, and never fails to feed her while ſhe is ſitting; but notwithſtanding this co-operation, it muſt be confeſſed that the greateſt part of the eggs are clear. A union of diſpoſitions is not ſufficient to operate fecundation; there needs likewiſe a certain conformity of temperament, in which reſpect the ſiſkin is far below the female Canary-bird. The few mule birds that are the produce of this union, reſemble both father and mother.

In Germany, the migration of the ſiſkins begins in October, or even earlier: at that time they feed on the ſeed of the hop, to the great injury of the proprietors: the place they have ſtopt in is well known by the quantity of leaves with which the ground is ſtrewed: they diſappear quite in the month of December, and return in February. In France, they come at vintage time, and return when the trees are in flower; they are fondeſt of the flower of the apple tree.

In

In England they are ſeen on their paſſage as in other place, ſometimes in great numbers, at other times in very ſmall flocks. The great flights happen every third or fourth year, and then, ſuch is the multitude, that ſome have ſuppoſed they were brought by the wind.

The ſong of the ſiſkin is not diſagreeable, but much inferior to that of the gold-finch, which it acquires with eaſe. It would likewiſe appropriate that of the Canary-bird, of the linnet, &c. could it hear them at an early age.

According to Olina, this bird lives to ten years; it is however to be remembered that among birds the females live longer than the males; but ſiſkins are little ſubject to diſeaſes, except to inflamation of the inteſtines, when they have been fed on hemp-ſeed.

In the cock ſiſkin the crown of the head is black, the upper part of the body of an olive colour, mottled with black; the rump has a tinge of yellow, the ſmall covert feathers above the tail are quite yellow, the larger ones olive, terminated with aſh-colour; ſometimes the throat is dun, and even black; the cheeks, the fore-part of the neck, breaſt, and inferior covert feathers of the tail, are a fine citron yellow;

low; the belly yellowiſh white, and ſo are the ſides, but mottled with black; there are two tranſverſe olive-coloured, or yellow ſtreaks, on the wings, the quill-feathers are blackiſh, bordered exteriorly with olive; the tail-feathers are yellow, except the two middle ones, which are blackiſh, bordered with greeniſh olive; the edges of all are black: the bill is brown at the point, the reſt is white, and the feet grey.

The head of the hen is not black, but greyiſh, and her throat is white.

The whole length four inches three fourths; the bill five lines; wings from tip to tip ſeven inches two thirds, the tail twenty-one lines, ſomewhat forked, and projecting ſeven or eight lines beyond the wings.

THE CHAFFINCH.

THE Chaffinch is a ſtout, hardy, well known bird, being common in almoſt every tree or hedge; he is about the ſize of the bull-finch, is very laviſh in his ſong, and when brought up

up from the neſt, or branchers, will ſing ſix or eight months in the year; though when wild, not above three months, and chiefly in breeding time. Some of theſe birds, when brought up under other good ſong birds, prove valuable, but the greater part are not worth keeping.

It is a cuſtom among the bird-men, when they want to learn the chaffinch, linnet, &c. a ſong, to blind them when they are about three or four months old; which is done by putting out their eyes with a wire made almoſt red hot; becauſe, as it is ſaid, they will be more attentive, and learn the better; but it would be much better never to confine them in cages, than purchaſe their harmony by ſuch barbarous uſage; it is poſſible the fact may prove as ſuggeſted, but the cruelty is a diſgrace to the human being who makes the experiment.

The cock of this kind may be eaſily diſtinguiſhed from the hen; he has a great deal more white in his wing than the hen, particularly on his pinion; his breaſt is more red, and the feathers of the whole bird are of a higher and brighter colour than the hen's. In an old bird, the head of the cock is bluiſh; the back of a reddiſh brown, with a mixture of aſh-colour, or green; the breaſt of a fine red, and the belly

belly white: the colours of the hen are not ſo bright and lively, her rump is green, the back not ſo brown, and the belly inclines to a dirty kind of green; the breaſt is alſo of a duller colour, more upon the grey.

They begin to build in April, and have young ones about the beginning of May. She builds near the top of a high hedge, or in the branches on the ſide of a tree: her neſt is extremely pretty, and only excelled by the gold-finch; the outſide is green moſs, ſmall ſticks, withered graſs, horſe and cow-hair, wool, feathers, &c. making an exceeding ſoft bed for her young, on which ſhe lays four or five eggs of a whitiſh colour, ſpotted with a few large reddiſh brown ſpots, and ſome ſmall ſpecks and ſtreaks at the largeſt end, of the ſame colour.

They may be taken at ten days old, and managed in the ſame manner as the gold-finch or linnet; they are hardy birds, that may be eaſily raiſed.

Theſe birds are taken in great plenty with clap-nets in June and July, eſpecially the young flight, called branchers; therefore it is hardly worth the trouble of bringing them up from the neſt.

THE GREEN-FINCH, OR GREEN-LINNET.

THIS bird is rather larger than the Chaffinch, of a ſtrong, hardy nature; they are frequently kept in cages, but have a very indifferent ſong, they are more valued for their learning to ring the bells in a cage, contrived for that purpoſe; though ſome of them, if brought up from the neſt, will learn to pipe, whiſtle, and imitate the ſong of other birds.

At the beginning of winter, and in hard weather, they gather in flocks, and may be taken with the clap-nets in great numbers.

The head and back of the cock are green, the edges of the feathers greyiſh; and the middle of the back hath ſomething of a cheſnut-colour intermixed; the fore-part of his head, neck, and breaſt, quite down to his belly and rump, are of a deep yellowiſh green; the lower belly inclining to whitiſh, the borders of the outermoſt quill-feathers of the wings are of an elegant yellow, as are alſo the feathers along the ridge

ridge of the wing. The colours of the hen are not ſo bright and lively; and on the breaſt and back ſhe hath oblong duſky ſpots; where the cock is of a fine yellow, her colours are of a ſordid green. The young cock-birds, as ſoon as they are feathered, may be known from hens, by the ſame brightneſs in their colours.

The green-bird has young ones about the middle of May. She builds in hedges, and makes a large neſt; the outmoſt part of which conſiſts of hay, graſs, ſtubble, &c. the middle of moſs, the inmoſt, in which the eggs lie, of feathers, wool, hair, &c. She lays five or ſix eggs, of a very faint green colour, ſprinkled with ſmall reddiſh ſpots, eſpecially at the blunt end. The bird, from the end of the bill to the end of the tail, is ten inches and a half; the bill is half an inch; and the tail two and a quarter. Its weight about ſixteen drachms.

The young ones may be taken at ten days old, and brought up with the ſame food and management as other birds of the finch kind; they are not very tender; only keep them clean, and there is no fear but they will thrive. They have little, however, to recommend themſelves,

for the trouble of keeping them in a domeſtic ſtate, but the colours; the cock is as finely feathered as moſt birds; and in an aviary makes as pretty variety as the beſt of them.

They are ſubject to but few diſeaſes, the moulting is the moſt material, and the bad effects of even that is commonly counteracted by a few blades of ſaffron, or a ſmall piece of iron put into their water.

THE GROSSE-BEAK, OR HAW-FINCH

WEIGHS about an ounce and three quarters, and from the tip of the bill to the end of the tail, is ſeven inches, and its breadth, when the wings are expanded, upwards of twelve. It has a hard broad bill, exceeding thick at the baſe, the circumference of which is ſaid to meaſure more than two inches; and is about three quarters of an inch long, terminating in a very ſharp point. The eyes are aſh-coloured or grey; the feathers at the baſe of the bill are orange-coloured, but black between the eyes; the reſt of the head is of a ruſty yellowiſh red, with a border of black feathers encompaſſing the lower mandible. The neck and upper part of the back, are more red, the middle of ſome of the feathers appearing pale, or whitiſh; the ſides of the body, the breaſt, and rump, are of a cinereous red, the belly, and under parts of the tail, more pale and inclining to white.

Some

Some of the ſhafts of the quill-feathers are white, others red, with their tips of a fine ſhining purple, and blue; the whole wings beautifully interſperſed with a variety of ſhades and colours.

The legs and feet are of a pale fleſh colour, the claws pretty large and ſtrong.

They frequent the woods and mountains during the ſummer ſeaſon, both in Italy and Germany, and the plains and vallies in the Winter; from whence in very hard ſeaſons, they have come over here into England. They feed upon the kernels of cherry-ſtones, olives, the kernels of the hawthorn tree, holly berries, &c. which by the ſtrength of their bills, they crack with very great eaſe.

THE VIRGINIA NIGHTINGALE; OR, RED GROSSE-BEAK.

THE Virginia Nightingale nearly reſembles the ſong-thruſh in ſize; the bill is of a paliſh red or duſky colour, encompaſſed with a border of black feathers extended below the chin; the head pretty large, upon which there grows a large pyramidical tuft, or towering creſt, of a bright ſcarlet, with which colour the neck, breaſt, and belly are adorned; the back, and tips or points of the wings and tail, are more faint, and rather of a pale browniſh colour.

This bird has many ſtrange geſticulations when it views its image in a glaſs; it raiſes and lowers its creſt, ſhakes its wings, and ſets up its tail after the manner of the peacock, at the ſame time, making a hiſſing noiſe, and ſtriking at the glaſs with its bill.

Theſe, as well as the preceding tribe, have ſuch an aſtoniſhing ſtrength in their beaks, that they will break the ſtones of almonds, olives,

olives, peaches, cherries, and all other kinds of fruit, with the utmoſt eaſe and facility; and which they do for the purpoſe of getting at the kernels, of which they are very fond.

Theſe birds are found chiefly in Virginia, New England, and ſeveral parts of North America, from whence they are frequently brought over into England. They ſing very agreeably, and ſome of their notes are much like thoſe of the nightingale, from whence it probably derived the name of the Virginia Nightingale.

The hen, as in all other birds, is not ſo beautiful in her colours as the cock, being more brown, with only a tincture of red; yet, when in cages, ſhe ſings as well as the cock, but her notes are not quite ſo loud. Both males and females having been tranſported into this country, many trials have been made to breed with them in a domeſtic ſtate, but hitherto without any ſucceſs, poſſibly from the climates not being congenial to the temperament of their compoſitions, or from the proper method of treating them being unknown, as they are of a very docile and familiar diſpoſition.

When in a cage they feed upon hemp and canary ſeeds, and will eat alſo the wood-lark's

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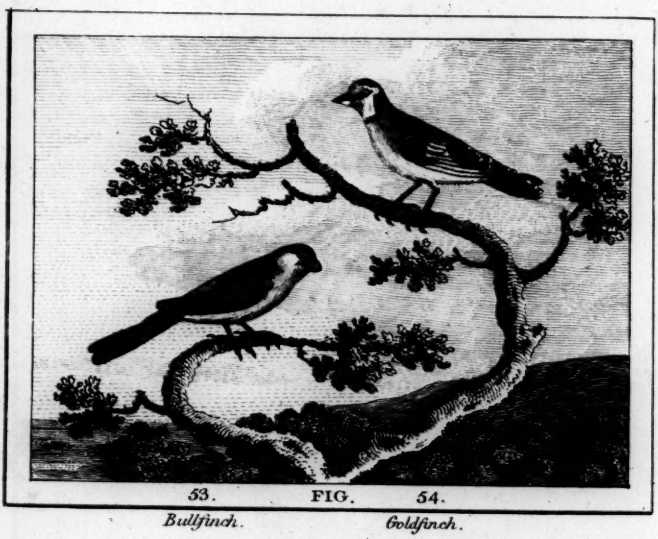
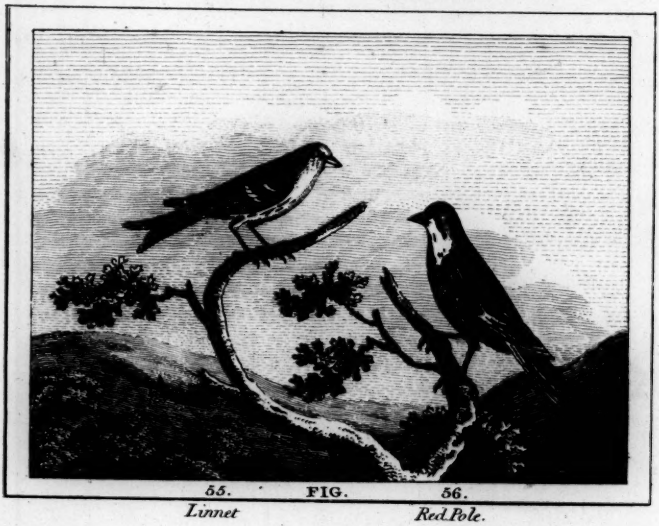


53. FIG. 54.

Bullfinch. *Goldfinch.*



55. FIG. 56.

Linnet *Red Pole.*

and nightingale's food. When they are ſick, which ſeldom happens, a ſpider, or meal-worm, will relieve them.

THE BULL-FINCH.

THE Bull-Finch, when at full growth, meaſures from the point of the bill to the tip of the tail ſix inches, of which the tail is two, and weighs about thirteen drachms. They have a black ſhort bill, very ſtrong and crooked, the upper part hanging over the under, like that of a hawk; the tongue ſhort, and the eyes of a hazel-colour; the head and neck in proportion to the body, larger than in the generality of ſmall birds, from which moſt probably, they derived their name. In ſome places they are called nopes, in others thick-bills, and in ſome hoops, moſt likely from their wild hooping ſort of note.

They are very docile birds, and though poſſeſſing no ſong of their own, they will nearly imitate the ſound of a pipe or whiſtle, and

which talent the hen poſſeſſes as well as the cock. The peculiar excellence of theſe birds is, that they never forget what they have once learned, though they hang among every ſo many birds; and it is poſitively aſſerted, that they may be taught to ſpeak ſeveral words very diſtinctly.

It is a bird much eſteemed in England for beauty and ſinging; for in the former he equals moſt, and in the latter, when well taught, excels all other birds of his ſize.

They are, in many parts, very ſcarce, which ſeems to be occaſioned by numbers of them being ſhot in the ſpring, on account of their deſtroying the early buds of the fruit trees; ſuch as the apple, pear, peach, and other garden trees, of which they are exceedingly fond, and by that means, do great damage to the gardeners, who therefore ſeek to deſtroy them as the greateſt peſt to their labours. In ſome parts of England they are conſidered as ſuch depredators as to have a reward placed upon their heads, and which, it is ſaid, the churchwardens are obliged to pay for every bull-finch that is killed, ſo that this little animal is not only a mark for wantonneſs to exerciſe its cruelty upon, but is alſo pointed out as an enemy which man needs a

reward

reward to encounter. It is, however, poſſibly, to this cauſe, that their being more ſcarce than any other of their tribe may be attributed

The cock is in bigneſs equal to the hen, but hath a flatter crown, and excels her in the beauty of his colours; a lovely ſcarlet or crimſon adorns his breaſt, the feathers on the crown of the head, and thoſe that compaſs the bill, are of a brighter black than thoſe of the hen, part of the neck, ſhoulders and back, are of a bluiſh aſh-colour, ſhaded with red; the belly and rump white, ſome of the quill-feathers have their outward ſhafts red, and the inner of a fine gloſſy black; others have their exterior edges white, which make a ſort of white line or croſs bar upon each wing; the tail is of ſhining black, the legs of a duſky colour, and the claws black. If both are ſeen together, the one may be very eaſily known from the other, the colours in the cock being much more reſplendent than in the hen: but whilſt theſe birds are young, it is more difficult to diſtinguiſh them; one of the ſureſt ways is, to pull a few feathers from their breaſt, when they are about three weeks old, and in about ten or twelve days after, the feathers that come in their place will appear of a curious red, if a

cock; and if a hen, they will come of a paliſh brown.

The bull-finch breeds late in the ſpring, ſeldom having young ones before the end of May or beginning of June; ſhe builds in an orchard, wood, or park, where there are plenty of trees; her neſt is not very common to be found; it is an ordinary mean fabric, made with ſeemingly little art, on which ſhe lays four or five eggs of a bluiſh colour, ſpotted at the biggeſt end, with large dark brown, and faint reddiſh ſpots.

Theſe birds muſt not be taken too young, they ſhould be at leaſt twelve days old; at firſt they muſt be fed in the ſame manner as the young linnet, chaffinch, &c. with bread, milk, and rape-ſeed, made into a paſte; and when grown up with rape and canary-ſeed, three-fourths rape, and one-fourth canary. They, as well as the ſtarlings, require much pains to be taken with them in the early part of their education, and ſhould never be fed without what they are wiſhed to learn being repeated to them; they ſoon grow attentive, and generally by then they are three months old, will begin to record to themſelves, after which a very few leſſons will render them perfect.

The

The placing them in a dark room, or covering up their cages at theſe times, has frequently been recommended, but which certainly is not at all neceſſary, as they will learn nearly in as ſhort a ſpace without taking that trouble, and repeat their leſſon with more freedom, when they have acquired it, from being familiar with the preſence of their tutor.

THE GOLD-FINCH

IS ſomething larger than the Canary-bird, and is a ſtraight handſome ſhaped bird, has a ſtraight ſharp aſh-coloured bill, and the eyes of a hazel-colour. The length of a full grown bird, from the tip of the bill to the point of the tail, is five inches and a half, of which the latter is two, and the former little more than half an inch long; when in fleſh it weighs about an ounce.

This bird is well known, and highly eſteemed in every part of the kingdom, both for ſinging and the beauty of its colours; a ring of curious ſcarlet-

ſcarlet-coloured feathers encompaſs the fore-part of his head, or baſis of the bill, and from the eyes to the bill on each ſide is drawn a black line, the jaws or cheeks white, the top of the head black, from which a broad black line is extended on both ſides, almoſt to the neck; the hinder part of the head is white; the neck, and fore-part of the back, are of a reddiſh aſh-colour; the rump, breaſt, and ſides of the ſame, but a little paler; the belly whitiſh, the wings and tail black; only the tips of the principal feathers in both are white; beſides, the wings are adorned with a moſt beautiful tranſverſe ſtroke of yellow or gold colour.

They are of ſo mild and gentle a nature, that, after they are caught, without uſing any art or care, they will fall to their meat and drink: nor are they ſo affrighted at the preſence of a man as moſt other birds are wont to be, nor very much troubled at their impriſonment in a cage; for after ſome little continuance therein, they become ſo familiar that though let looſe, they will not go away, but if frightened, fly directly to their cage for ſhelter.

They are called in ſome places Draw-waters, from their aptneſs to learn to draw their water when

when they want to drink, in a little ivory bucket, faſtened to a ſmall chain, made for that purpoſe; they will pull up their bucket, drink, and throw it down again; and many of them are taught to lift up the lid of a ſmall box or bin, with their bill, to come at their meat, &c. They are wonderfully delighted with viewing themſelves in a glaſs, fixed to the back of their bucket-board, where they will ſit upon their perch, pruning and dreſſing themſelves with the greateſt care imaginable, often looking in the glaſs, and placing every feather in the niceſt order; no capricious female can take greater pains, or be more particular in dreſſing herſelf, than this little bird is in rectifying all diſorders in its plume, not ſuffering a feather to lay amiſs.

The gold-finch is a long-lived bird, that will ſometimes reach to the age of twenty years: Mr. Willoughby makes mention of one that lived twenty-three years. They fly in flocks, or companies; and when at liberty, delight to feed upon the ſeeds of thiſtle, teaſel, hemp, dock, &c.

The feathers on the ridge of the wing in the cock are coal-black, quite up to the ſhoulder, whereas in the hen-bird, though they appear black,

black, are of a grey, or duſky aſh-colour, when compared to thoſe of the cock; he is browner on the back and ſides of the breaſt; the red, yellow, and, in ſhort, all his colours are much brighter than thoſe of the hen; theſe are conſtant, infallible marks, by which the cock may be known from the hen, either old or young.

The gold-finch begins to build in April, when the fruit-trees are in bloſſom: as they excel all our ſmall birds in beauty of feathers, ſo do they likewiſe in art: their neſt is not only very ſmall, but exceeding pretty: the outſide conſiſts of very fine moſs, curiouſly interwoven with other ſoft bedding; the inſide lined with delicate fine down, wool, &c. She lays ſix or ſeven white eggs, ſpeckled and marked with a reddiſh brown. To find their neſt is not very eaſy, for they generally build in fruit-trees, viz. apple, pear, plumb, &c. but moſt commonly in the apple, pretty high upon the branches, where either the bloſſom or leaves ſecure them from diſcovery, and at ſuch a time when they cannot be got at without the hazard of damaging the bloom or young fruit. They ſometimes build in the elder tree; and ſometimes in thorns and hedges; but not near ſo common as in fruit-trees.

The

The gold-finch has ſix or ſeven young ones at a breeding; they are tender birds, and therefore ſhould not be taken before they are pretty well feathered; and then their meat ſhould be prepared after this manner:—ſoak white bread in fair water, ſtrain it, and then boil it with a little milk, till it is as thick as haſty pudding, adding to it a little flour of canary ſeed with this meat feed them every two hours, or oftener, giving them but little at a time, two or three ſmall bits only; begin to feed them about ſun-riſing, and continue after this manner till ſun-ſetting: let them have freſh victuals every day, or every other day at fartheſt: in about a month's time they may be brought by degrees to feed on canary-ſeed; they will, it is true, feed on the hemp-ſeed, but it is not near ſo good for them as the former.

If a young gold finch be brought up under the canary-bird, the wook-lark, or any other fine ſinging bird, he will take their ſong very readily.

This is a long-lived and very healthful bird, that is ſeldom out of order; but if by chance they are found to droop, a little ſaffron in his water, or ſome chalk and gravel mixed together

at the bottom of his cage, will be found to do him ſervice; thiſtle-ſeed, and other wild ſeeds which they feed on when at liberty, will alſo be found very beneficial.

Theſe birds are taken almoſt at any time of the year, either with lime-twigs, or the clap-net, in great numbers during the young flight in June, July, or Auguſt; but the beſt time for catching them is about Michaelmas. They frequent the fields where the thiſtle, and thoſe other ſeeds grow, as mentioned before; they are eaſily caught, being of ſo gentle and familiar a nature, and will both feed and ſing almoſt immediately.

THE LINNET.

THIS bird is univerſally known and admired in every place he is met with, chiefly for the melody of his voice; though Navaretti, in his account of China, takes notice of a ſimilar bird, which he ſays the natives rear for the purpoſe of fighting after the manner of European game-cocks. The Linnet is in length, from the point of the bill to the end of the tail, five inches and a half long, and uſually weighs about ten drachms.

For the ſweetneſs of his ſinging, the linnet is ſo much eſteemed, that, by many perſons, he is thought to excel all ſmall birds. He has certainly a curious fine note of his own, little inferior to the moſt celebrated birds, and may be taught likewiſe to pipe, whiſtle, or the ſong of any other bird; but as his own is ſo good, that trouble is unneceſſary. He is, however, pretty

apt in learning, and if brought up from the neſt, will take the wood-lark's or canary-bird's ſong to perfection.

The cock bird of this kind may be known, either old or young, by theſe two marks; firſt, the feathers on his back are much browner than thoſe of the hen; and ſecondly, by the white on the three or four longeſt feathers of the wing; if it appears clear, bright, and broad, and reaches up to the quills, it is a ſure ſign of a cock-bird; for the white in the wing of the hen is much leſs, fainter, and narrower.

They commonly build in a thick buſh, or hedge, and ſometimes among furze-buſhes, &c. making a ſmall, pretty neſt, the outſide of bents, dried weeds, and other ſtubble matter, and the bottom all matted together; the inſide of fine ſoft wool, mixed with downy ſtuff, gathered from dried plants, with a few horſe-hairs, made exceeding neat and warm, on which ſhe lays four, and ſometimes five white eggs, with fine red ſpecks, eſpecially at the blunt end; and has young ones by the middle of April or beginning of May.

The young ones may be taken at ten days old, or ſooner: it is very neceſſary, however, that

that they ſhould be kept very warm, clean, and fed at leaſt once in every two hours. Their food at firſt ſhould conſiſt of rape-ſeed, ſoaked eight or ten hours in water, then ſcalded, and afterwards bruiſed, clearing it as much as poſſible from the hulls; to this ſhould be put twice as much white bread, that had firſt been ſoaked in water and afterwards boiled in a little milk, mixing them together in a kind of ſoft paſte, and which ſhould be prepared freſh every day, as ſour meat is very fatal to all kinds of birds; when they begin to pick about their meat, and feed themſelves, ſet ſcalded rape-ſeed in their cage, to wean them from the bread and milk as ſoon as poſſible; becauſe ſometimes feeding too long upon ſoft food will make them rotten. It will be a month or ſix weeks before they will be able to crack their ſeeds, and live entirely upon hard meat; ſuch as rape and canary-ſeed, which is the beſt food they can have. When ill, they ſhould be treated in the ſame manner as we have obſerved for other birds of the finch kind.

Linnets are eaſily taught to whiſtle, or to imitate other birds; and when it is intended they ſhould be thus inſtructed, they ſhould have their leſſons at the times they are fed, for they

they will learn very much before they can crack hard ſeeds; or hang them under any bird you have a mind they ſhould learn his ſong; for theſe birds, when young, are exceeding apt, and will learn any ſong or tune.

Great numbers of theſe birds are taken with clap-nets, in June, July and Auguſt, and likewiſe flight-birds about Michaelmas in great plenty, by laying the nets near a ſmall purling ſtream, where they come to drink; and as when thus caught they ſoon become familiar, it is ſcarce worth the trouble of bringing them up from the neſt.

THE RED-POLE; OR, RED-HEADED LINNET.

THIS bird is about the ſize of the common linnet: it is not a very fine bird for ſinging, but has a pretty chattering ſort of ſong, though it cannot be called melodious.

The top of the head and breaſt of the cock is adorned with a remarkable ſhining red; the upper part of the body like the common linnet; the lower part of the belly inclining to a white; the prime feathers of the wings and tail duſky; the tail about two inches long, and ſomething forked; the utmoſt borders of the wing and tail feathers around are white; the legs and feet are duſky; the claws black and long, for the bigneſs of the bird; but the legs very ſhort.

In this kind, the hen alſo hath a ſpot of red upon her head; but more faint than that of the cock, and of a ſaffron colour.

They

They build much in the manner of the common linnet; and feed upon canary, hemp, and rape-ſeed, as the linnet, gold-finch, &c. In general they frequent the ſea-coaſts more than the inland parts of the kingdom; and Mr. Albin is of opinion they do not breed in this country, but leave us in the ſpring, having taken ſhelter here during the winter from more intenſe colds.

Willoughby has deſcribed ſeveral other kinds of linnets, which differ only in the ſhading of the colour of their feathers, as to their external appearance, ſome of them, eſpecially of the tropical regions, having a very brilliant plumage; but many of them widely differ in the more general eſtimation, being entirely deſtitute of that harmony by which the common brown linnet renders himſelf a favourite.

THE TWITE.

THIS bird is, in colour and make, ſomething like the linnet, but leſs; it is a bird vaſtly briſk and merry, that is always a ſinging, therefore is frequently hung among other birds, to provoke them to ſing.

The cock has a very ſhort aſh-coloured bill, the legs black, and has a curious red ſpot upon his rump, which the hen hath not.

It is a bird not known to breed in this country; they viſit ſome parts of England in the winter, and go away again in the ſpring; they are are ſaid to be very common in ſome parts of France, and are called there by a name which with us ſignifies the Leſſer Linnet; and they ſay their eggs are like the eggs of that bird, but leſs.

The bird-catchers take them as they do linnets, &c. They feed upon canary and rape-ſeed. It is a pretty, familiar, gentle-natured bird, and by ſome reckoned well worth keeping.

THE BUNTING.

THE Common Bunting is about the ſize of the yellow-hammer. It is of a pale olive brown ſhaded with black, the feathers on the breaſt being ſomewhat lighter than thoſe on the back and wings.

There are ſeveral varieties of this bird, but the moſt particular is the *ſnow bunting*, which has the forehead and crown white, with ſome mixture of black; the rump, the outer feathers of the wings and tail white. In Scotland they are called ſnow-flakes, from their appearance in ſnowy weather; the more northward they are found, the whiter their plumage.

THE WHEAT-EAR

WEIGHS upwards of an ounce, and has a ſlender black bill, about half an inch long, the tongue is cloven or ſlit, and the inſide of the mouth black, the eyes are of an hazel colour, above which there is a pale line paſſes towards the hinder part of the head; below the eyes, a pretty large black one, which extends itſelf from the corners of the mouth to the ears.

The head and back appear of a cinereous colour, with a mixture of red reſembling the colour of the groſs-beak.

The rump in the generality of them is white, from whence by ſome it has the name of white tail. The belly is white, faintly daſhed with red; the breaſt and throat more deep, and of a ſtronger colour, both the covert and quill-feathers of the wings are black, with their extreme edges white, tinctured with a duſky red.

The tail is ſomething more than two inches long, the middlemoſt feathers have their upper half white in ſome, and others their lower, with their tips and feathers likewiſe all white.

They feed on worms, beetles, and ſmall inſects, and breed in old forſaken coney burrows. They are very timorous and fearful of the hawk, and if but a dark cloud overſhadow them, and intercept the rays of the ſun, they will run into holes and hide themſelves.

They are very numerous in many parts of England, particularly in the neighbourhood of Eaſt-bourn, where, it is ſaid, many hundred dozens are killed every year.

THE ORTOLAN.

IT is ſomewhat leſs than the yellow-hammer. The plumage on the upper parts is browniſh cheſnut, mixed with black, the under parts are pale rufous. Theſe birds are common in France and Italy, but are not found in England. They are caught in numbers to fatten for the table. This is done by putting them in a dark room, and feeding them with oats and millet. By this proceſs they become ſo fat, that they would die from that cauſe alone were they not killed for ſale. In this ſtate they will ſometimes weigh three ounces, and are accounted the moſt luxurious repaſt of the epicure, being, as it were, one lump of exquiſite fat.

THE SWALLOW.

OF this tribe there are reckoned upwards of ſix and thirty diſtinct ſpecies, although there are not more than ſeven or eight known in theſe climates. At the head of this race we place the common houſe-ſwallow, as the one with whom we are beſt acquainted; this ſpecies in general meaſures about ſeven inches from the point of the bill to the end of the tail, and from the tip of the one wing to the tip of the other, when extended, ſeldom leſs than eleven or twelve; and commonly weigh from fourteen to fifteen drachms. They have a ſhort black bill, but very broad at the baſe, ſo that they are enabled to open their mouths very wide; they have large eyes of an hazel colour; the head, neck, and upper parts of the body, are of a fine ſhining purpliſh blue, with an orange coloured ſpot above the bill, and another of the ſame colour underneath: the breaſt and belly

belly are of a duſky white, with a ſlight reddiſh ſhade; the covert feathers are of the ſame colour as the back and head, but the quill-feathers are of a perfect black; they have a pretty long tail, made up of twelve feathers, which is forked, the outermoſt feathers being pointed and near an inch longer than the others; they are all black, except the two middlemoſt, with a white ſpot upon each, which ſpots make a beautiful line which croſſes the tail, interrupted only by the two middle feathers.

They feed chiefly upon flies, gnats, and beetles, which they catch moſtly, if not entirely, while they are upon the wing; and it is for this purpoſe that they are continually hovering over pools and ſtanding waters, where inſects frequent without number. They have an exceeding ſharp eye, and are ſo fleet and uncertain in their courſe, that it is no uncommon thing for a ſportſman to declare war againſt and ſeek the conſtant deſtruction of theſe harmleſs animals, merely for the purpoſe of rendering himſelf a good ſhot.

It was a long time a matter of doubt among the moſt eminent naturaliſts, whether theſe birds went into a ſtate of torpor in the winter or emigrated into other countries; in ſupport of

of the former opinion, Dr. Fry uſed to relate that he was told by a fiſherman, who was accounted a man of veracity, that being near ſome rocks on the coaſt of Cornwall, he ſaw at a very low ebb, a black liſt of ſomething adhering to the rock, which when he came to examine, he found it was a great number of ſwallows and ſwifts hanging by each other in the ſame manner as is frequently obſerved by bees, which were commonly covered by the ſea-waters; they appeared perfectly lifeleſs, but recovered on being held in his hand, or put to the fire.

This account of the fiſherman met with ſome kind of confirmation by that given by Dr. Colas to the Royal Society on the 12th of February, 1712-13, who ſpeaking of their mode of fiſhing in the northern parts, by breaking holes, and drawing their nets under the ice, ſaid that he ſaw ſixteen ſwallows ſo drawn out of the lake of Samrodt, and about thirty out of the King's great pond in Roſineilen; and that at Salebitten, he ſaw two ſwallows juſt come out of the water, that could ſcarcely ſtand, from being both very wet and very weak: with their wings hanging on the ground and that he had often obſerved the ſwallows to

be

be very weak for ſome days afer their appearancc.

The ingenious Dr. Owen, ſpeaking of woodcocks and fieldfares viſiting us in the winter, and then returning northward, ſays, "But as to "cuckoos and ſwallows, 'tis generally allowed "that they ſleep in winter; having, as it is "ſaid, been found in hollow trees and caverns; "nor it this at all unlikely, though on the "other hand, I can ſee no abſurdity in ſup-"poſing that theſe ſhould go upon a ſummer "as the others do upon a winter pilgrimage; "that theſe purſue a leſſer heat, as well as the "other fly from a greater cold."

Willoughby however is of a firm opinion, that the ſwallows emigrate from theſe climates in the winter, and that they take their route into Egypt and Ethiopia, in which he is confirmed by moſt modern travellers; we have it indeed corroborated in a very particular manner by a very reſpectable author, in ſpeaking of the towns of Southwould, Ipſwich, and others in the eaſtern parts of Great Britain, in the following words: "In theſe towns, Southwould and Ipſwich, in "particular, and ſo at all the towns on this "coaſt, from Orford Neſs to Yarmouth, is the

" ordinary place where our ſummer friends,
" the ſwallows, firſt land when they come to
" viſit us; and here they may be ſaid to begin
" their voyage when they go back into warmer
" climates. I was ſome years ſince at this
" place, about the beginning of October; and
" lodging at a houſe that looked into the
" church-yard, I obſerved in the evening an
" unuſual number of ſwallows ſitting on the
" leads of the church, and covering the tops
" of ſeveral houſes round about. This led
" me to enquire of a gentleman of the place,
" what could be the meaning of ſuch a multi-
" tude of ſwallows having collected together,
" and ſitting in that manner?" 'O, Sir, (re-
'plied he,) you may eaſily perceive the rea-
'ſon; the wind is off the ſea; for this is the
'ſeaſon of the year, when the ſwallows, their
'food failing here, begin to leave us, and re-
'turn to the country, wherever it be, from
'whence I ſuppoſe they came; and this being
'the neareſt land to the oppoſite coaſt, and
'the wind being contrary, they are waiting
'for a gale, and may be ſaid to be wind-bound.'
" And of the juſtneſs of this remark I was
" convinced in the morning, when I found the
" wind

" wind had come about to the north-weſt in
" the night, and there was not a ſingle ſwallow
" to be ſeen.

" To me, however, it appears certain, that
" ſwallows neither come hither merely for
" warm weather, nor retire merely from cold;
" they, like ſhoals of fiſh in the ſea, purſue
" their prey; they are a voracious creature,
" and feed flying; for their food is the inſects,
" of which in our ſummer evenings, in damp
" and moiſt places, the air is full. They come
" hither in the ſummer, becauſe our air is
" fuller of fogs and damps than in other coun-
" tries, and for that reaſon breeds greater quan-
" tities of inſects. If the air be hot and dry,
" the gnats die of themſelves; and even the
" ſwallows will be found famiſhed, and fall
" down dead, when on the wing for want of
" food. In the like manner, when the cold
" weather comes in, the inſects all die, and
" then, of neceſſity, the ſwallows quit us, and
" follow their food. This they do in going
" off ſometimes in vaſt flights like a cloud;
" and ſometimes when the wind grows fair,
" they go away a few at a time, not ſtaying at
" all upon the coaſt. This paſſing and re-

" paſſing of the ſwallows is obſerved no where " ſo much as on this eaſtern coaſt, namely, " from above Harwich to the eaſt point of " Norfolk, called Winterton Neſs, north, " which is all right againſt Holland; the paſ- " ſage of the ſea being, as I ſuppoſe, too broad " from Flamborough Head, and the ſhore of " Holderneſs, in Yorkſhire, &c."

The *ſwift* is the largeſt of the kind known in theſe climates, being near eight inches long, and the extent of its wings eighteen inches, though it ſcarcely weighs an ounce. The whole plumage is a ſooty black, except the throat, which is white. The legs are remarkably ſhort, and conſequently almoſt all its actions are performed on the wing. All its food is collected in this manner, conſiſting entirely of inſects; and even the materials of its neſt it collects either as they are carried about with the wind, or picks up from the ſurface in its ſweeping flight.

The *martin* is inferior in ſize to the common ſwallow, and its tail leſs forked. The head and upper parts of the body are of a gloſſy blue black; the breaſt and belly are white, as is alſo the rump, which may be conſidered as its diſtinctive character. It builds commonly under the

the eaves of houſes, and ſometimes againſt the ſides of high cliffs over the ſea.

The *ſand martin* is the leaſt of the ſwallow kind that viſits Great Britain. The upper parts of the body are mouſe-coloured; the breaſt and belly are white, with a mouſe-coloured ring as a collar. To form its neſt it bores ſome feet deep into a high ſand-bank, where it depoſits five or ſix white eggs. It has been ſaid that the young of this bird are very fat, and in flavour ſcarcely inferior to the ortolan.

Theſe birds are all known by their very large mouths, which, when they fly, are always kept open: they are not leſs remarkable for their ſhort ſlender feet, which ſcarcely are able to ſupport the weight of their bodies; their wings are of immoderate extent for their bulk; and their note is a ſlight twittering, which they ſeldom exert but upon the wing.

This peculiar conformation ſeems attended with a ſimilar peculiarity of manners. Their food is inſects, which they always purſue flying. For this reaſon, during fine weather, when the inſects are moſt likely to be abroad, the ſwallows are for ever upon the wing, and ſeen purſuing their prey with amazing ſwiftneſs and agility. All ſmaller animals, in ſome meaſure, find

find ſafety by winding and turning, when they endeavour to avoid the greater: the lark thus evades the purſuit of the hawk; and man the crocodile. In this manner, inſects upon the wing endeavour to avoid the ſwallow; but this bird is admirably fitted by nature to purſue them through their ſhorteſt turnings. Beſides a great length of wing, it is alſo provided with a long tail, which turns it in its moſt rapid motions; and thus, while it is poſſeſſed of the greateſt ſwiftneſs, it is alſo poſſeſſed of the moſt extreme agility.

The neſt of theſe birds is built with great induſtry and art; it is formed of mud from ſome neighbouring brook, well tempered with the bill, moiſtened with water for the better adheſion, and ſtill farther kept firm, by long graſs and fibres; within it is lined with gooſe feathers, which are ever the warmeſt and the neateſt. The martin covers its neſt at top, and has a door to enter at; the ſwallow leaves her's quite open. But our European neſts are nothing to be compared with thoſe the eſculent ſwallow builds on the coaſts of China and Coromandel; the deſcription of which we give in the phraſe of Willoughby. "On the ſea-coaſt "of the kingdom of China," ſays he, "a ſort of

"of party-coloured birds, of the ſhape of "ſwallows, gather a certain clammy glutinous "matter, perchance the ſpawn of whales and "other young fiſhes, of which they build their "neſts, wherein they lay their eggs and hatch "their young. Theſe neſts the Chineſe pluck "from the rocks, and bring them in great "numbers into the Eaſt-Indies to ſell. They "are eſteemed by gluttons, as great delicacies; "who diſſolving them in chicken, or mutton-"broth, are very fond of them: far before "oyſters, muſhrooms, or other dainty and "liquoriſh morſels."

At the latter end of September the ſwallow leaves us; and for a few days previous to their departure, aſſemble, in vaſt flocks, on houſe-tops, as if deliberating on the fatiguing journey that lies before them. This is no ſlight undertaking, as their flight is directed to Congo, Senegal, and along the whole Morocco ſhore. There are ſome, however, left behind in this general expedition, that do not depart till eight or ten days after the reſt. Theſe are chiefly the latter weakly broods, which are not yet in a condition to ſet out.

Thoſe that migrate are firſt obſerved to arrive in Africa, according to M. Anderſon, about

about the beginning of October. They are thought to have performed their fatiguing journey in the ſpace of ſeven days. They are ſometimes ſeen, when interrupted by contrary winds, wavering in their courſe far off at ſea, and lighting upon whatever ſhip they find in their paſſage. They then ſeem ſpent with famine and fatigue, yet ſtill they boldly venture, when refreſhed by a few hours reſt, to renew their flight, and continue the courſe which they had been ſteering before.

Theſe are facts which, ſays Goldſmith, have been proved by inconteſtible authority; yet it is a doubt whether all ſwallows migrate in this manner, or whether there may not be ſome ſpecies of this animal that, though externally alike, are ſo internally different, as to be very differently affected by the approach of winter. We are aſſured, from many, and theſe not contemptible witneſſes, that ſwallows hide themſelves in holes under ground, joined cloſe together, bill againſt bill, and feet againſt feet. Some inform us that they have ſeen them taken out of the water, and even from under the ice, in bunches, where they are aſſerted to paſs the winter without motion; for beſides thoſe inſtances we have already related,

Rheaumur,

Rheaumur, who particularly intereſted himſelf in this enquiry, received ſeveral accounts of bundles of ſwallows being thus found in quarries and under the water. Theſe men, therefore, have a right to ſome degree of aſſent; and are not to loſe all credit, though in this inſtance they may be miſtaken in what they aver.

All, however, that we have hitherto diſſected, are formed within like other birds: and ſeem to offer no obſervable variety. Indeed, that they do not hide themſelves under water, has been pretty well proved, by the noted experiment of Friſch, who tied ſeveral threads dyed in water-colours, round the legs of a great number of ſwallows, that were preparing for their departure: theſe, he ſays, upon their return the enſuing ſummer, brought their threads back with them, no way damaged in their colour; which they moſt certainly would, if during the winter, they had been ſteeped in water: yet ſtill this is a ſubject on which we muſt ſuſpend our aſſent, as Klein, the naturaliſt, has brought ſuch a number of proofs, in defence of his opinion, that ſwallows are torpid in winter, as even the moſt incredulous muſt allow to have ſome degree of probability.

THE GOATSUCKER.

THIS bird, notwithſtanding the difference of ſize, ſeems to be nearly allied to the ſwallow, both in form and manners. Like the ſwallow, it is remarkable for the wideneſs of its gape; like it, it feeds upon inſects; like it, collects its food upon the wing; indeed, by ſome authors it has been termed the nocturnal ſwallow, for it preys entirely in the night, or rather in the duſk of the evening, when the other ſwallows are retired to reſt.

There is only one ſpecies known in Europe, and this is conſiderably larger than the ſwallow, being 10½ inches in length, and in weight two ounces and a half. The ground of the plumage is almoſt black, but it is beautifully diverſified with aſh-colour and white in different parts; and it has, like all the kind,

a number

a number of briſtles about the bill. It is a great deſtroyer of cock-chaffers and beetles; and its note reſembles the noiſe of a ſpinning-wheel. From its nocturnal habits it has been called the night-hawk and the chum-owl. It is diſtinguiſhed from the ſwallows by not having a forked tail. It viſits England about May, and returns in Auguſt. There appears to be no other ground for the ridiculous ſtory of its ſucking the goats, but the width of its mouth, which is to be accounted for on much more rational principles. It makes no neſt, but lays its eggs on the bare ground, or ſome looſe crag, without any ſeeming care whatever.

There are ſixteen foreign ſpecies of this bird enumerated, one of which is called the Grand Goatſucker, and is the ſize of a ſmall buzzard: it inhabits Cayenne.

THE SPARROW.

TRIFLING as theſe birds appear, from the amazing familiarity with which they aſſociate, we had almoſt ſaid in the habitations of man, they were formerly conſidered as a ſtock of ſuf-

ficient importance to give name to that genus of ſmall birds which we have been deſcribing. Of late, however, like all things common, they have not only been treated with indifference, but almoſt contempt, for moſt modern naturaliſts have concluded they did them ſufficient honour by retaining the name of the ſparrow in their catalogues, without giving the ſmalleſt deſcription of their perſons. They are ſaid to have no particular claim to notice from any peculiar beauty in their plumage, nor from poſſeſſing any melody of ſong, having only a loud chirrup, which is more unharmonious than agreeable. The firſt of theſe poſitions we do not admit, as the feathers of ſome of them may claim a preference to others who are held in high eſtimation, as a proof of which we ſhall refer to the following deſcriptions;—as to the ſecond charge, we have the authority of the ingenious Daines Barrington, to conclude it unfounded, and that its not having any ſong, is to be attributed to the want of tuition in the neſt; for he, in his Letter to the Royal Society, on the ſinging of birds, having inſiſted that birds have not any innate ideas of the notes which are ſuppoſed to be peculiar to each ſpecies, ſays, "Every one knows that the

"common

"common houſe-ſparrow, when in a wild "ſtate, never does any thing but chirp; this, "however, does not ariſe from want of powers "in this bird to imitate others, but becauſe he "only attends to the parental note. But to "prove this deciſively, I took a common ſpar-"row from the neſt when it was fledged, and "educated him under a linnet; the bird, how-"ever by accident, heard a goldfinch alſo, and "his ſong was therefore a mixture of the "linnet and goldfinch." This, of itſelf, is ſufficient to prove the talent and capacity of the ſparrow, and which has frequently been confirmed by neſtlings being put under Canary-birds, almoſt as ſoon as hatched, and being thus brought up, have ſung nearly as well as their foſter-parents.

Theſe birds are exceedingly prolific, having from four to ſix in a brood, and the one we are now treating of is ſuppoſed to have two, and ſometimes three broods in a ſeaſon, and which, poſſibly, may in ſome meaſure be attributed to the plentiful ſupply of food they are enabled to procure from frequenting farm-yards, &c. They breed in almoſt any hole they meet with, whether in trees, or houſes, but are moſt partial to thoſe they find in the roofs of barns, but

which

which are their haunts of leaſt ſafety, for they there become the frequent and eaſy prey of rats, ferrets, &c. They ſometimes feed on worms and inſects, but their chief food is all kinds of grain, in ſearch after which they do conſiderable miſchief in the corn-field in the ſummer, and in the ſtacks in the winter.

The ſparrow's bill is very thick, and about half an inch long, the eyes are of a hazel colour, the head of a duſky aſh-colour, with two ſmall white ſpots above the eyes, and a broad brown line paſſing from them; the back and rump are of a duſky aſh-colour, ſhaded with green. The feathers on the outſide of the ſhafts that divide the neck from the back are red, and black on the inſide, but grow more pale towards the bottom. The wings are of a duſky colour, with ſome of their edges red, and a white line running acroſs them, others have their middle parts black. The throat has a very large black ſpot upon it, ſome parts of it of a whitiſh aſh-colour, with a long white ſpot under each ear; the belly, and lower part of the breaſt are whitiſh. The tail is about two inches long, the feathers of a duſky black, with reddiſh edges, the legs and feet of a pale brown, and the claws black.

The

The cock is diſtinguiſhed from the hen, by the black ſpot under the throat, and the white lines croſſing the wing, thoſe of the hen being of a duſky brown, and none of its colour ſo lively and fair as thoſe of the cock.

Theſe birds are extremely ſalacious, and are very ſhort lived. The cocks are remarkably bold and courageous; they will ſometimes keep upon the ground with a degree of impudent confidence, and ſuffer themſelves to be approached within a very few yards before they take wing, and even then they will pitch again at a ſmall diſtance with the ſame effrontery.

The *Chineſe ſparrow* is not ſo large as the common ſparrow before deſcribed; it has a ſhort thick aſh-coloured bill; there is a remarkable difference in the colour of the cock and the hen; the head, neck, breaſt, and belly, of the former being quite black, the reſt of the body, with the wings and tail, of a ſort of cheſnut colour, or ruſty brown. The upper parts of the body of the hen are not near ſo bright as thoſe of the cock, being much more brown and duſky, the lower part of the breaſt and belly, is more pale, inclining to a light brown, or hair colour; with beautiful regular

ſpots

ſpots of black and white upon the ſides of the belly, and underneath the wings; the legs and feet of the ſame bright colour, inclining to a yellow; and thoſe of the cock more dark and duſky.

They are ſaid by travellers, to be very miſchievous birds, that at ſome particular ſeaſons of the year do a great deal of damage to the country people.

The *Bengal ſparrow* is ſomething larger than the common houſe ſparrow, the bill is of a light horn colour, ſharp pointed, and pretty large; the top of the head is of a fine light yellow, with an orange coloured ſhade; the neck, the ſides of the wings and upper parts of the body, are of a duſky brown, with the edges of the feathers more pale and light, with a broad pale ſtripe paſſing round the breaſt. The belly is conſiderably paler, with a yellowiſh gloſs or tincture upon it. The hen appears darker than the cock, the ſtripes upon the breaſt being a good deal narrower. The legs and feet are of an orange colour, and the claws more brown.

Father Morella, in his deſcription of Congo, ſays, "The ſparrows there, in time of rain,

"change

change their colour to red, though they afterwards return to what they were before, which he ſays is uſual with other ſorts of fowls."

Father Cavazzi, in his hiſtorical deſcription, ſays, "there's a little bird in Congo, not much unlike a ſparrow, which at firſt ſight ſeems wholly black, but upon a nearer view may be diſcovered to be a kind of blue; which as ſoon as day breaks ſets up his note and ſings, but the excellency of his ſong is, that it harmoniouſly, and almoſt articulately, pronounces the name of Jeſus Chriſt; which repeated by many of them in concert, (ſays the father) is a heavenly muſic worthy our ſpecial obſervation ſeeing thoſe heathen nations are excited to own the true God by irrational creatures."

There's a ſtory likewiſe of another of theſe miſſionary gentlemen, Father Coprani, that in ſome degree reſembles the former. In the ſame part of the country, he mentions a bird whoſe ſong conſiſts of theſe plain words, *Va dritto*, that is, go right.

Theſe ſtories we have repeated from the good fathers above mentioned, but muſt leave the credit of them to the judgment and faith of our readers.

The *Cape ſparrow* is leſs than the former, nor is its bill, which is of a paliſh brown colour quite ſo thick and ſtrong as in the generality of the birds of this kind. The colour of the eyes pretty nearly reſembles thoſe of the mountain ſparrow. The upper part of the body, with the head and neck are black, which colour ends in a point upon the belly, the lower part of which, together with the thighs, and round the fore part of the wings is white.

The ſides of the wings are of a light brown, the edges of ſome of the quill-feathers black. The colour of the tail is the ſame as the wings. The legs and feet are of a duſky brown.

Its note is ſaid to reſemble that of a whiſtling wind; they are found chiefly about the Cape of Good Hope, and ſome of the Dutch ſettlements there.

The *Mountain ſparrow* is about the ſize of the common houſe ſparrow, the body ſomething longer, the bill thick and ſtrong, of an aſh-colour, the circles of the eyes of a yellowiſh white, the pupils black. The upper part of the head, the ſides, and upper part of the throat are of a duſky brown, beautifully mottled with black

black and white; with a line of more duſky colour encircling the hinder part of the head, and a broad white one paſſing from the under chop and bending downwards. The back is of a ruſty coloured brown, with a few black ſtripes upon it, the wings not ſtriped but of a deeper colour, and more inclining to red, with the edges of ſome of the covert feathers white. The tail is of a dark colour ſprinkled with ſmall round ſpots of white.

They are found in mountainous woody places but are not very common.

The *Red-headed ſparrow* is nearly as large as the common ſparrow, but of a more ſlender ſhape in its body, it has a ſhort aſh-coloured bill, with a yellowiſh caſt towards the baſe; the top, and back part of the head are both red, the ſides white, with a black ſpot underneath each eye, in the form of a half circle; the outſide feathers on the throat black, and a fine ring of white paſſing almoſt round the neck. The ſcapular feathers of the wings, and upper part of the back are of a reddiſh, or ruſty coloured brown, a conſiderable part of them covered with black ſtroaks, or marks, and ſome of the ends of the covert feathers tipped with

white; which occaſions two croſs lines of white upon each wing; the quill-feathers have not any ſpots or marks upon them, and are of a more light brown colour. The belly and breaſt are of a ſort of duſky coloured white. The tail is of a duſky brown, with ſome of the edges more light. The legs and feet are yellow, the claws black.

THE AMERICAN MOCK BIRD.

IT is univerſally admitted by all travellers, that the harmony of the European groves far excel what is to be heard in thoſe of any other part of the globe; and Thomſon, the poet, not unaptly conſiders this ſuperior talent for melody in the European birds, to be a ſort of compenſation for their great inferiority in point of gaudy plumage; and which plumage has been thus moſt emphatically alluded to:

"Words could not afford variety enough to "deſcribe all the beautiful tints that adorn ſome "of them. The brilliant green of the emerald, "the flaming red of the ruby, the purple of "the amethyſt, or the bright blue of the ſa-"phire, could not, by the moſt artful combi-"nation, ſhew any thing ſo truly lively or de-"lightful to the ſight as the feathers of the "chilcoqui or the tautotol." To theſe might be

be added a long liſt, equally beautiful, which inhabit the foreſts of America, and thoſe of the tropical regions; ſuch as the curucui, barbets, jacamar, the tody, &c. But as little inſtruction can be obtained from an account of feathers which, we agree with the above quotation, it would be impoſſible to deſcribe, we ſhall not, in this place, make the attempt, or give the liſt of them, but confine ourſelves to one of the ſpecies, namely, the American Mock Bird, who has certainly ſome claim to that diſtinction from the ſuperiority of his oracular endowments. It muſt, however, be admitted, that foreign birds, when brought to Europe, muſt, in general, be heard to great diſadvantage, as many of them, from their tameneſs, have certainly been brought up by hand, which is fatal to their ſongs, from the want of parental tuition; and beſides which, it is very difficult to bring over the ſoft-billed birds, who are the moſt melodious, upon account of freſh meat and the hearts of animals being the only ſubſtitute that can be given them for inſects, which are their common food.

It is but a plain bird to the eye, about the ſize of a thruſh, of an uniform grey colour, and a reddiſh

a reddiſh bill. It is poſſeſſed not only of its own natural notes, which are muſical and ſolemn, but it can aſſume the tone of every other animal in the wood, from the wolf to the raven. It ſeems even to ſport itſelf in leading them aſtray. It will at one time allure the leſſer birds with the call of their males, and then terrify them, when they have come near, with the ſcreams of the eagle. The mock-bird, however, pleaſes moſt when it is moſt itſelf. At thoſe times it uſually frequents the houſes of the American planters; and, ſitting all night on the chimney-top, pours forth the ſweeteſt and the moſt various notes of any bird whatever. It would ſeem, if accounts be true, that the deficiency of moſt other ſong-birds in that country is made up by this bird alone. They often build their neſts in the fruit-trees about houſes, and are eaſily rendered domeſtic.

With regard to the original notes, however, of this bird, we are ſtill at a loſs; as this can only be known by thoſe who are accurately acquainted with the ſong of the other American birds.

Kalm, indeed, informs us, that the natural ſong is excellent; but that traveller ſeems not to have been long enough in America to have diſtinguiſhed

diſtinguiſhed what were the genuine notes: with us, mimics do not often ſucceed but in imitations.

I have little doubt, however, but that this bird would be fully equal to the ſong of the nightingale in its whole compaſs; but then, from the attention which the mocker pays to any ſort of diſagreeable noiſes, theſe capital notes would be always debaſed by a bad mixture.

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Little Dove or Rock Pigeon.

Powter. *Dove house Pigeon.*

THE PIGEON.

THE Pigeon, from its great fecundity, has tempted man to endeavour to reclaim it from a ſtate of nature, and teach it to live in habits of dependence; and in which he has in ſome meaſure been ſucceſsful. Indeed its fecundity ſeems to be increaſed by human aſſiduity, ſince thoſe pigeons that live in a wild ſtate, in the woods, are by no means ſo fruitful as thoſe in our pigeon-houſes nearer home. The power of increaſe in moſt birds depends on the quality and quantity of their food; and it is ſeen, in more than one inſtance, that man, by a judicious alteration of diet, ſupplying food in plenty, and allowing the animal at the ſame time a proper ſhare of freedom, has brought ſome of thoſe kinds which commonly lay but once a year, to become much more prolific.

All the beautiful varieties of the tame pigeon derive their origin from one ſpecies, the *ſtock-dove*;

dove; the Engliſh name, implying its being the ſtock or ſtem from whence the other domeſtic kinds have been propagated. This bird, in its natural ſtate, is of a deep bluiſh aſh colour; the breaſt daſhed with a fine changeable green and purple; the ſides of the neck of a reddiſh gold colour; its wings marked with two black bars, one on the quill-feathers, and the other on the covert; the back is white, and the tail barred near the end with black. Theſe are the colours of the pigeon in a ſtate of nature; and from theſe ſimple tints has man by art propagated a variety that words cannot deſcribe, nor even fancy conceive. Nature, however, ſtill perſeveres in her great outline; and though the form, colour, and even the fecundity of theſe birds may be altered by art, yet their natural manners and inclinations continue invariable, and undergo no change by any experiments made on them.

The ſtock-dove, in its native freedom, differs from the ring-dove, a bird that ſome naturaliſts conſider has never been reclaimed, from its breeding in the holes of rock and the hollows of trees. All other birds of the pigeon-kind build, like rooks, in the topmoſt branches of the foreſt, and chuſe their habitation as remote as poſſible

poſſible from man. But this ſpecies is ſoon induced to build in artificial cavities; and from the temptation of a ready proviſion and a numerous ſociety, eaſily ſubmits to the tyranny of man. Still, however, it preſerves its native colour for ſeveral generations, and becomes more variegated only in proportion as it removes from the original ſimplicitly of its colouring in the woods.

The varieties of the tame pigeon are ſo numerous, that it would be a fruitleſs attempt to deſcribe them all: for human art has ſo much altered the colour and figure of this bird, that by pairing a male and female of different ſorts, they can be bred almoſt to a feather. From hence we have the various names expreſſive of their ſeveral properties, ſuch as, carriers, tumblers, powters, horſemen, croppers, jacobines, owls, nuns, runts, turbits, barbs, helmets, trumpeters, dragoons, finnikins, &c. all birds that at firſt might have varied from the ſtock-dove; and by having theſe varieties ſtill improved by pairing, food, and climate, the different ſpecies have been propagated.

But there are ſeveral ſpecies of the wild pigeon, which bear a near affinity to the ſtock-dove, yet differ ſufficiently from it to require a

diſtinct deſcription. Of this ſpecies is the *ring-dove*, a pigeon much larger than the former, and may in general be diſtinguiſhed from all others by its ſize. Many attempts have been made to render it domeſtic, by ſetting their eggs under the tame pigeon in dove-houſes; but as ſoon as they could fly, they always returned to their ſtate of nature. On the firſt appearance of winter, they aſſemble in large flocks in the woods, and leave off cooing, which note of courtſhip they do not reſume till the commencement of ſpring, which renews their deſires, by ſupplying them with food, and which they continue to practiſe till the approach of the enſuing winter. Some of this ſpecies weigh near ſixteen ounces, and meaſure from the point of the bill to the end of the tail twelve inches, and from the tip of one wing to that of the other, when extended, near two feet. The head, back, and coverts of the wings, are of a bluiſh aſh-colour; the under ſide of the neck and breaſt of a red purple mixed with aſh-colour; round the neck near the back part of the head is a ſemicircular line of white; hence the name of ring; above and beneath that the feathers are bright and gloſſy, and of changeable colours as oppoſed to the light. The belly is of a light

ſtraw

ſtraw colour, the large quill-feathers are duſky, and the reſt of an aſh-colour, except the baſtard wing, underneath which is a white ſtroke pointing downwards.

The *turtle-dove* is a ſmaller, but a much ſhyer bird than any of the pigeon kind; it frequents the weſt of England during the ſummer months, breeding in thick woods, generally of oak. It is eaſily known from the reſt by the iris of the eye, which is of a bright yellow, and a circle that ſurrounds the eye-lids, which is of a beautiful crimſon colour. The top of the head is aſh-coloured interſperſed with olive, the chin and forehead white: there is a ſpot of black feathers on each ſide the neck curiouſly tipt with white; the back is aſh-coloured with a tincture of olive brown; the ſcapulars and coverts of a reddiſh brown, ſpotted with black; the quill-feathers of a duſky brown, the breaſt of a light purpliſh red, the extremity of each feather is yellow; the ſides and inner coverts of the wings are bluiſh, and the belly white. The length of the tail is three inches and a half, has two feathers in the middle of a duſky brown; the reſt are black delicately tipt with white; the end and exterior ſide of the outward feathers are wholly white.

The

The fidelity and conſtancy of theſe birds is proverbial; and it is ſaid that if a pair is put in a cage, if one dies, the other ſeldom long ſurvives. It is a bird of paſſage, and does not ſtay in our northern climates during winter. They come over here in large flocks in the ſummer to breed, and though they delight in open mountainous and ſandy countries, yet they build their neſts in the middle of the thickeſt woods, chooſing the moſt unfrequented places for incubation. They feed upon all ſorts of grain, but the millet ſeed is their favourite repaſt. The turtle-dove commonly meaſures twelve inches and a half in length, from the tip of the bill to the end of the tail; and when the wings are extended, the breadth is twenty-one inches. Some naturaliſts affirm, that this bird lays its eggs twice a year, and, if this aſſertion may be depended on, which is very probable, as it is a bird of paſſage, it is once when it viſits us in ſummer, and once when it migrates to ſome warmer climate in winter.

The turtle-dove is the ſymbol of fidelity and conſtancy between huſband and wife, among friends, of ſubjects towards their princes, and of armies to their generals. On the reverſe of a medal of Heliogabalus, a woman is ſeen ſitting, holding

holding in one hand a turtle-dove, with this inſcription, *Fides exercitûs*. This ſymbol takes its riſe from the male and female uſually flying together, and her pining when ſhe has loſt her mate.

The *dove-houſe* pigeon breeds every month; but when the weather is ſevere, and the fields covered with ſnow, it muſt be ſupplied with food. At other times it may be left to itſelf; and he generally repays the owner for his protection. The pigeon lays two white eggs, which produce young ones of different ſexes. When the eggs are laid, the female ſits fifteen days, not including the three days ſhe is employed in laying, and is relieved at intervals by the male. The turns are generally pretty regular. The female uſually ſits from about three or four in the evening till nine the next morning; at which time the male ſupplies her place, and continues on the neſt from nine till three, while ſhe is ſeeking refreſhment abroad. Thus they ſit alternately till the young are hatched. If the female does not return at the expected time, the male ſeeks her, and drives her to the neſt; and, ſhould he in his turn be neglectful, ſhe retaliates with equal ſeverity. When the young ones are hatched, they only require

require warmth for the firſt three days; a taſk which the female takes entirely upon herſelf, and never leaves them except for a few minutes to take a little food. After this they are fed for about ten days, with what the old ones have picked up in the fields, and kept treaſured in their crops, from whence they ſatisfy the craving appetites of the young ones, who receive it very greedily.

As this method of feeding the young from the crop is different in birds of the pigeon-kind from all others, we have been induced to give the following explanation. "Of all "birds, for, its ſize, the pigeon has the largeſt "crop, which is alſo made in a manner quite "peculiar to the kind. In two of theſe that "were diſſected by a member of the Royal "Academy of Sciences, it was found that if "the anatomiſt blew air into the wind-pipe, it "diſtended the crop or gullet to a prodigious "ſize. This was the more extraordinary, as "there ſeemed to be no communication what-"ever between theſe two receptacles; as the "conduit by which we breathe, as every one "knows, leads to a very different receptacle "from that where we put our food. By what "apertures the air blown into the lungs of the

"pigeon

" pigeon makes its way into the crop, is un-
" known; but nothing is more certain than
" that theſe birds have a power of filling
" the crop with air; and ſome of them, which
" are called croppers, diſtend it in ſuch a man-
" ner, that the bird's breaſt ſeems bigger than
" its body. The peculiar mechaniſm of this
" part is not well known; but the neceſſity
" for it in theſe animals is pretty obvious.
" The pigeon, as we all know, lives entirely
" upon grain and water: theſe are mixed to-
" gether in the crop; and in the ordinary way
" are digeſted in proportion as the bird lays in
" its proviſion. But to feed its young, which
" are very voracious, it is neceſſary to lay in a
" ſtore greater than ordinary, and to give the
" food a kind of half maceration to ſuit their
" tender appetites. The heat of the bird's
" body, aſſiſted by air and numerous glands ſe-
" parating a milky fluid, are the moſt neceſſary
" inſtruments for this operation; but, in pro-
" portion as the food macerates, it begins to
" ſwell alſo; and the crop muſt of conſequence
" be conſiderably dilated. Still, however, the
" air which is contained in it gives the bird a
" power of contracting it at pleaſure; for if it
" were filled with more ſolid ſubſtances, the

" bird could have no power to compreſs it.
" But this is not the caſe, the bird can compreſs
" its crop at pleaſure; and driving out the air,
" can thus drive out the food alſo, which is
" forced up the gullet with great eaſe. The
" young ones open-mouthed receive this tribute
" of affection, and are thus fed three times a
" day. In feeding, the male uſually ſupplies the
" young female; while the old female ſupplies
" the young of the oppoſite ſex. The food with
" which they are ſupplied is more macerated
" in the beginning; but as they grow older,
" the parents give it leſs preparation, and at
" laſt drive them out to ſhift for themſelves; for
" when well fed, the old ones do not wait for
" the total diſmiſſion of their young; but, in
" the ſame neſt, are to be found young ones
" almoſt fit for flight, and eggs hatching, at the
" ſame time."

Although the fidelity of the turtle-dove is proverbial, the pigeon of the dove-houſe is not ſo faithful; and, having been ſubjected to man, it puts on incontinence among its other domeſtic habits. Two males are often ſeen quarrelling for the ſame diſtreſs; and when the female admits the freedoms of a new gallant, her old companion ſhews evident marks of diſpleaſure,

diſpleaſure, abſtains from her company, or if he approaches, it is only to chaſtiſe her. There have been inſtances when two males, being diſpleaſed with their reſpective mates, have thought proper to make an exchange, and have lived in great harmony with their new companions.

So great is the fertility of this bird in its domeſtic ſtate, that we have Stillingfleet's authority for aſſerting, that fourteen thouſand, ſeven hundred and ſixty were produced from a ſingle pair in the courſe of four years. But the ſtock-dove ſeldom breeds above twice a year; for in the winter months, the whole employment of the fond couple is rather for ſelf-preſervation, than tranſmitting a poſterity. But their attachment to their young is ſtronger than among thoſe who breed ſo often; whether it be that inſtinct acts moſt powerfully upon them in their ſtate of nature, or that their affections are leſs divided by the multiplicity of claims; but ſuch is the fact.

Pigeons are very quick of hearing, have a very ſharp ſight, and when purſued by the hawk or kite, and are obliged to exert themſelves, are exceedingly ſwift in flight. It is the nature of pigeons to love company and aſ-

ſemble in flocks, to bill in their courtſhip, and to have a plaintive note.

M. Duhamel aſſerts, "that pigeons do not feed upon the green corn, and that their bills have not ſtrength enough to ſearch for the ſeeds in the earth; but only pick up the ſcattered grains, which would be parched up by the heat of the ſun, or infallibly become the prey of other animals." He further adds, "that from the time of the ſprouting of the corn, pigeons live chiefly upon the ſeeds of wild uncultivated plants, and therefore conſiderably leſſen the quantity of weeds that would otherwiſe encumber the ground; as is manifeſtly evident from a juſt eſtimate of the quantity of grain neceſſary to feed all the pigeons of a well ſtocked dove-houſe." But the facts alledged by Mr. Worlidge and Mr. Liſle, in ſupport of the contrary opinion are incontrovertible. Mr. Liſle relates, that a farmer of his acquaintance, who was a man of ſtrict veracity, aſſured him he had been witneſs to an acre ſown with peas, and the wet weather preventing their being harrowed in, every pea was taken away in half a day's time by pigeons; and Mr. Worledge ſays, "It is to be obſerved, that where the flight of pigeons fall, there they fill themſelves,

ſelves, and away, and return again where they firſt roſe, and ſo proceed over a whole piece of ground, if they like it. Although you cannot perceive any grain above the ground, they know how to find it. I have ſeen them lie ſo much upon a piece of ground of about two or three acres ſown with peas, that they devoured at leaſt three parts in four of the ſeed, which, I am ſure, could not be all above the ſurface of the ground. That their ſmelling is their principal director, I have obſerved; having ſown a ſmall plat of peas in my garden, near a pigeon houſe, and covered them ſo well that not a pea appeared above ground, in a few days, a parcel of pigeons were buſy in diſcovering this hidden treaſure; and, in a few days more, I had not above two or three peas left out of about two quarts that were ſown; for what they could not find before, they found when the buds appeared, notwithſtanding they were hoed in, and well covered. Their ſmelling alone directed them, as I ſuppoſed, becauſe they followed the ranges exactly. The injury they do at harveſt on the peas, vetches, &c. is ſuch, that we may rank them among the greateſt enemies the poor huſbandman meets with; and the greater, becauſe he may not erect a pigeon-houſe,

houſe, whereby to have a ſhare of his own ſpoils; none but the rich being allowed this privilege, and ſo ſevere a law being alſo made to protect theſe winged thieves, that a man cannot encounter them, even in defence of his own property. You have therefore no remedy againſt them, but to affright them away by noiſes, or ſuch like. You may, indeed ſhoot at them; but you muſt not kill them; or you may, if you can, take them in a net, cut off their tails, and let them go; by which means you will impound them; for when they are in their houſes, they cannot bolt or fly out of the tops of them, but by the ſtrength of their tails, after the thus weakening of which, they remain priſoners at home."

The pigeon was reckoned by the ancient poets, the favourite bird of Venus. Homer ſays, it was the office of pigeons to provide for the nouriſhment of Jupiter. This fable takes its riſe from the ſame word which means, in the Phœnician language, either a prieſt, or a pigeon; for it is allowed that the Curetes, or prieſt of Cybele, took care of the nouriſhment of Jupiter. The people of Aſcalon had ſuch a high veneration for pigeons, that

that they durſt not kill and eat them, leſt they ſhould feed on their gods themſelves; and they were particularly careful of all thoſe that were produced in their city. The Aſſyrians alſo conſecrated pigeons, becauſe they had a notion that the ſoul of their once famous queen Semiramis had taken its flight to heaven in the ſhape of a dove.

Silius Italicus relates, that two pigeons formerly reſted on Thebes, and that one took its paſſage to Dodona, where it gave an oak the virtue of delivering oracles; the other, which was white, flew over the ſea to Lybia, where it perched between the two horns, on the head of a ram, and gave oracles to the people of Marmarica. Philoſtratus ſays, that the pigeon of Dodona alſo delivered oracles; that it was of gold ſeated on an oak, and attended by a concourſe of people who came thither, ſome to conſult the oracle, others to ſacrifice. There were always prieſts and prieſteſſes there, who gained a comfortable ſubſiſtence by the offerings. Sophocles alſo informs us, that Herculus received an oracle from the pigeons of the foreſt of Dodona, which foretold the period of his life.

Pigeons,

Pigeons, whether in their wild ſtate, or kept in a dove-cot, feed almoſt entirely upon grain, either in its perfect ſtate, when firſt ſown or ripened in the hulls, or upon the buds as it begins to ſhoot out of the ground; they are particularly fond of horſe-beans and grey-peas, and which being early ſown, give them a ſeaſonable ſupply for their young. They alſo frequent the fields of Barley, buckwheat, tares, and white peas, to the great injury, and no leſs mortification of the laborious huſbandman.

Although the wild pigeon contrives to provide for itſelf during the whole year; yet thoſe of the dove-houſe require a plentiful ſupply of food in froſty weather, and what is ſtiled by the huſbandmen benting-time, namely, from the middle of June to the beginning of July, when the graſs, called bent, begins to have ſeed, and the peas have not become ſufficiently mature for their ſubſiſtence; but thoſe who keep them find a good account in being at this ſmall expence, their produce much more than repaying them.

Though pigeons make a great deal of dirt, yet they do not like to live in it; and it is very neceſſary

neceſſary that the dove-cot ſhould be kept clean, and frequently ſtrewed with gravel; they are exceedingly fond of ſalt; and what is rather ſingular, there is not a cure for ſcarce any of the diſorders to which they are ſubject, without a plentiful ſupply of this ingredient; and herein we have a ſtrong proof of the wonderful inſtinct beſtowed by the Almighty Creator on all animals for their neceſſary preſervation.

Beſides thoſe we have enumerated, which are bred ſolely for the ſupply of the table, there are great varieties kept for pleaſure and curioſity; and theſe varieties by conſtant and various intermixtures, have been ſo extended, that it would be a no leſs vain than needleſs attempt, to enter upon every difference; but as the principal of them differ ſo materially from each other in figure and feather, they merit a deſcription.

The *Carrier* evidently ſtands foremoſt amongſt this claſs; they are rather larger than common ſized pigeons, commonly meaſuring from the beak to the end of the tail, fifteen inches, and weigh nineteen or twenty ounces; their feathers lie very cloſe, even and ſmooth; their fleſh is naturally firm, their necks long and ſtraight, and when they ſtand upright on their

legs ſhew a very elegant figure, and upon which account are uſually ſtiled the king of pigeons. From the lower part of the head, to the middle of the upper chap, there grows out a white, naked, fungous fleſh, which is called the wattle, and is generally met by two ſmall protuberances of the ſame nature, riſing on each of the under chap. The circle round the black pupil of the eyes, is commonly of a duſky red, though they ſometimes approach a ſcarlet; theſe are alſo encompaſſed with the ſame ſort of naked, fungous matter, which is very thin, generally of the breadth of a ſhilling; but when this luxuriant fleſh round the eye is thick and broad, it denotes the carrier to be a good breeder, and one that will rear very fine young ones. The curious in theſe birds reckon upon twelve properties as eſſentially requiſite to conſtitute a handſome carrier: three in the head, three in the eye, three in the wattle, and three in the beak. Thoſe of the head conſiſt in its flatneſs, ſtraitneſs and length; for inſtance, when a carrier has a very flat ſkull, a little indented in the middle with a long narrow head, it is greatly admired. The eyes ſhould be broad, circular and uniform; that is, they ſhould be equal, full, and free from irregularities. Some

mention

mention the diſtance which ought to be between the back of the wattle and the edge of the eye; but this is not a property, for when a carrier lives to be three or four years old, has a broad eye, and a large wattle, they will join of courſe.

The wattle ſhould be broad acroſs the beak, ſhort from the head towards the point of the bill, and leaning a little forwards from the head. This has given riſe to an artful practice of ingeniouſly raiſing the hinder part of the wattle, filling it up with cork, and binding it in with fine wire, in ſo neat a manner as not to be eaſily detected.

The beak ſhould be long, ſtraight, and thick: though an inch and a half is a long beak, it muſt not meaſure leſs than one inch and a quarter in length; and being black is conſidered as an addition to its beauty.

The length and thickneſs of its neck, are ſo eminent a mark of its elegance, as not to be paſſed over in ſilence; ſome call this a property, and indeed it muſt be granted that it greatly encreaſes the beauty of this broad cheſted bird, and more eſpecially ſo when the pigeon carries its head rather backwards, as it ſhews itſelf to great advantage.

The plumage of this bird is generally either dun or black, though there are alſo ſplaſhed, whites, blues, and pieds of each feather; but the dun and black agree beſt with the before-deſcribed properties; yet the blues and blue-pieds being very ſcarce, are great rarities, conſequently of great value, though they are inferior in the above properties.

This ſpecies of the pigeon, were originally bred at Baſſora, an ancient city of Perſia, and from thence tranſmitted to Europe; they are called carriers, from having been uſed to convey intelligence by letters, from one city to another. It is from their extraordinary attachment to the place of their nativity, and more eſpecially where they have trained up their young, that theſe birds were employed in ſeveral countries as the moſt expeditious carriers. They are taken from where they are bred, to the place from whence they are to return with intelligence. The letter being gently tied under the wing, in ſuch a manner as not to incommode the bird's flight, it is then ſet at liberty to return. The winged meſſenger no ſooner finds itſelf at large, than its love for its native home influences all its motions. It immediately flies up to a conſiderable height, making

making an extenſive circle, which having traverſed two or three times, it then, with great certainty and exactneſs, darts itſelf by ſome unknown intuitive principle towards its native ſpot, though at the diſtance of many miles, bringing its meſſage to the perſon to whom it is directed. By what viſible means they diſcover the place, or by what compaſs they are conducted in the right way, is equally myſterious and unknown, but it has been proved by experiment, that they will perform a journey of forty miles, in the ſpace of one hour and a half; which is a degree of diſpatch three times ſooner than the ſwifteſt four-footed animal can poſſibly perform. This method of ſending diſpatches was in great vogue in the Eaſt, and particularly at Scanderoon, till very lately; as, according to Dr. Ruſſel, the practice is now diſcontinued. It was uſed there on the arrival of a ſhip, to give the merchants at Aleppo a more expeditious notice than could be deviſed by any other means; and which, Father Anril ſays, they would do in three hours, notwithſtanding the diſtance from Scanderoon to Aleppo is thirty leagues.

Great attention was formerly paid to the training of theſe pigeons, in order to be ſent from

from governors in a beſieged city, to generals that were coming to ſuccour it; from princes to their ſubjects with the news of ſome victory or any other important tranſaction.

In the Eaſt, they kept relays of theſe pigeons in conſtant readineſs to carry expreſſes to all parts of the country. When the governor of Damiata heard the news of the death of Orillo, he let fly a pigeon, under whoſe wing he had faſtened a letter; this flew to Cairo, from whence a ſecond was diſpatched to another place, as was cuſtomary, ſo that the death of Orillio (Arioſto, canto 15.) was made known to all Egypt, in the ſpace of a few hours. But the ſimple uſe of them was known in very early times: Anacreon informs us, that he held a correſpondence with his lovely Bathyllus, by a dove. Tauroſthenes, by means of a pigeon, which he cauſed to be decked with purple, ſent the news to his father, who lived in the iſle of Ægina, of his victory in the Olympic games, on the very day he had gained it. When Modena was beſieged, Brutus within the walls, kept an uninterrupted correſpondence with Hirtius without, and this by the aſſiſtance of pigeons, ſetting at nought every ſtratagem of the beſieger, Anthony, to ſtop theſe winged couriers. In the

times

times of the Cruſades, there are many inſtances of theſe birds being made uſeful in the ſervice of war. Taſſo relates one during the ſiege of Jeruſalem; and Joinville another, during the cruſade of St. Louis.

In order to train a pigeon for this purpoſe, take a ſtrong, full-fledged, young carrier, and convey it in a baſket, or bag, to ſome little diſtance from home, and there turn it looſe; having repeated this two or three times, extending the diſtance every time, it may at length be taken ten, or twenty miles, and ſo on, till they will return from the moſt remote parts of the kingdom. If not practiced when young, the beſt of them will fly but inſecurely, and ſtand a great chance of being loſt; it is alſo very neceſſary that the pigeon intended to be ſent with the letter, ſhould be kept in the dark, and without food for about eight hours before it is let looſe.

The *Horſeman*. It is a matter of great diſpute, whether the horſeman is an original pigeon, or whether it is not a baſtard ſpecies, between a tumbler and a carrier, or a powter and a carrier, and ſo bred over again from a carrier; for it is certain the more frequent this is performed, the ſtronger and more graceful the horſeman

horſeman becomes. There is a ſpecies of this ſort brought from Scanderoon, famous for the rapidity of their flight, and the vaſt diſtance they will go; which is the only incident that ſeems to ſupport the opinion that they are an original ſtock; but this does not obviate the difficulty, for they may be bred after the ſame manner at Scanderoon, and ſo imported into Europe.

This bird is in ſhape and make very like the carrier, only leſs in all its properties; its body is ſmaller, its neck ſhorter; neither is there ſo much luxuriant encruſted fleſh upon the beak and round the eye, ſo that the diſtance between the wattle and the eye, is much more conſpicuous. This ſpecies of the pigeon are decorated with a variety of colours; but the moſt diſtinguiſhed, are the blue and blue-pieds, which generally prove the beſt breeders. When let out of their houſe they will fly four or five miles diſtance in a few minutes, ſweeping over a very large circuit for an hour or two without reſting; and it is this breed which is chiefly made uſe of in this country, for the deciding of bets, or the conveying of letters; the true genuine carriers being very ſcarce.

The *Dutch Cropper* was originally bred in Holland; the body is thick, clumſy, and ſhort,

as

as are alſo the legs, which are feathered down to the feet; they have a large pouch or bag hanging under their beak, which they can ſwell with wind, or depreſs at pleaſure; their crop hangs low, but is very large; they are looſe feathered on the thighs, and ſtand wide on their legs, they are gravel-eyed, and ſuch bad feeders of their young ones, that as ſoon as they have fed off their ſoft meat, it is neceſſary to place their young ones under a pair of ſmall runts, dragoons, or powting-horſemen, who will act the part of nurſes better than their thoughtleſs parents.

There are a great variety of colours in this pigeon, and the Dutch are very careful in the breed of them; for when they are fed off their ſoft meat, they place the young ones under more tender nurſes, and then put the old ones in different coops for a month, feeding them with hemp or rape-ſeed, which makes them very ſalacious, and then turning them together, they breed pigeons with very good properties.

The *Powting-Horſeman* is a race produced between the horſeman and the cropper; and agreeable to the number of times that their young ones are bred over to the cropper,

they have the appellation of firſt, ſecond, and third breeding; and the more frequent this method is practiſed, the greater is the improvement the crop receives from it. There is a breed called the Engliſh powter, which, from the peculiar pains that have been taken in pairing, are brought to the greateſt degree of perfection. And ſo particular have the curious been in the breed of them, as to lay down rules for their ſize, figure, and almoſt the colour and ſituation of every feather. By theſe rules, a complete powter ought to meaſure eighteen inches from the tip of the beak to the end of the tail; to be regular ſhaped, with a hollow back, ſloping off taper from the ſhoulders; the legs from the toe-nail, to the upper joint in the thigh ſhould meaſure ſeven inches. The crop ought to be large and circular towards the beak, riſing behind the neck, ſo as to cover and run neatly off at the ſhoulders, with a ſmall girt. Of the feather: thoſe compoſed of different colours are moſt eſteemed, as the blue-pied, black-pied, red-pied, and yellow-pied, and in this quality to arrive to any degree of eminence, the front of the crop ſhould be white, encircled with a ſhining green, interſperſed with the ſame colour he is pied, but

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the white ſhould not reach the back of the head; there ſhould be a patch, in the ſhape of a half moon, falling upon the chop, of the ſame colour with which he is pied; the head, neck, back, and tail, muſt preſerve a uniformity of colour, and if a blue-pied pigeon, he ſhould have two black ſtreaks or bars near the end of both wings. When the pinion of the wing is ſpeckled with white, in the form of a roſe, it is called a roſe-pinion, and is highly eſteemed, though it is a great rarity to find any one complete in this property; their legs and thighs muſt be ſtout and ſtrait, and well covered with white ſoft downy feathers; and the nine flight feathers of the wing ſhould be white. The crop ought to be filled with wind, ſo as to ſhew its full extent with eaſe and freedom; for it is a very great fault when a bird overcharges his crop with wind, and ſtrains himſelf ſo much, that he ſometimes falls backwards, becauſe he is not able to give a quick vent to the confined air, which makes him diſquiet and heavy, and many a fine bird has, by this ill habit, either fallen into the ſtreet, down a chimney, or become an eaſy prey to the cats. The reverſe is being looſe wind-

ed, ſo that he exhibits ſo ſmall a crop, as to appear to as little advantage as an ill-ſhaped runt. He ſhould play erect, with a fine well ſpread tail, which muſt not touch the ground, nor ſink between his legs, neither muſt it reſt upon his rump; he ſhould draw the ſhoulders of his wings cloſe to his body, diſplaying his limbs without ſtraddling, and to walk almoſt upon his toes, without jumping or kicking, as is the manner of the uploper, but moving with an eaſy majeſtic air.

The powter that approaches neareſt theſe properties, is the moſt valuable; and ſome curious perſons, by a patient perſeverance, and great expence, have bred theſe birds nearly to the ſtandard preſcribed.

The keeping them from food half a day, will cauſe them to ſwell their crop to its full extent, and make them appear to the beſt advantage; but great care muſt be afterwards uſed to put a ſtop to the dangerous conſequence of their over-feeding themſelves, which they will do, if not timely prevented. Theſe pigeons make a very ſtriking appearance on the outſide of a building, though the favourite ſort are ſeldom permitted to fly, for fear of the accidents

accidents already mentioned, on account of their crops, particularly thoſe that are apt to overcharge themſelves with wind.

There is a great deal of trouble, time and expence, requiſite for breeding and rearing of young powters, for they require a great deal of attendance, as every ſingle bird muſt be parted during the winter ſeaſon, and placed in a ſeparate pen or coop, which muſt be lofty and ſpacious, that they may not get an ill habit of ſtooping. In the ſpring, when they are matched, two pair of dragoons ſhould be provided to every pair of powters, for feeders or nurſes; for they ſhould never be permitted to hatch their own eggs, they being ſuch unfeeling parents, if left to themſelves, as would frequently ſtarve their young ones. The dragoons muſt be kept in a loft ſeparate from the powters, and when the hen powter has laid her eggs, it ſhould be ſhifted under a dragoon, that has alſo lately laid an egg, and the egg of the dragoon put under the powter, it being very proper the powter ſhould have an egg or eggs to ſit upon, or ſhe will quickly lay again; and this often repeated, will be the cauſe of her death. Very great caution muſt be obſerved, and that in due time, to prevent theſe birds from

from gorging, which the large croped ones are apt to do, and is often the occaſion of their death.

A great deal of time muſt be ſpent upon them, to make them tame and familiar, for the powter ſhould be uſed to company, and frequently attended, chuckled, and talked to, during the winter, ſtroking their backs, and alſo clacking to them as a hen does to her chickens, or they will become ſhy, and loſe one of their greateſt properties, for which they are ſo much admired, which is called ſhewing.

In breeding, great care muſt be taken not to match a cock and hen of the ſame family, as otherwiſe the race will ſoon degenerate. The powters were formerly the greateſt favourites, but have now loſt ſome of their preference, by an opinion that an almond tumbler would be equally handſome, if bred with the ſame care and attention.

The *Uploper* is a native of Holland, being originally bred there; it nearly reſembles the Engliſh powter, in all its properties, only it is ſmaller in every reſpect; it has a very round crop, in which it commonly hides its bill; it has ſmall ſlender legs, with its toes ſhort and

cloſe

cloſe together, on which he trips ſo exactly, when walking as to leave the ball of the foot quite hollow; it plays very upright, is cloſe-thighed, and it is the cuſtom of this pigeon, on approaching the hen, to leap to her with its tail ſpread, from hence the name uploper is derived, from the Dutch word *uplopen*, to leap up. It is a great rarity to ſee any of theſe pigeons pied, they being almoſt always either all white, black, or blue.

The *Pariſian Powter*, though brought into England from Bruſſels, is originally a native of Paris; it partakes of the ſame nature as the Engliſh powter, though it is not ſo well made; its body and legs are ſhort, it has generally a long, but not a large crop, it is thick in the the girt, and is generally bull or gravel-eyed. This bird is greatly admired for its plumage, which is very elegant, and peculiar to this ſpecies only; every feather being ſtreaked with a variety of colours, the flight excepted, which is white; the more red this bird has interſperſed with its other colours, the greater is the value ſet upon it.

The *Dragoon* is generally conſidered as having been originally the produce of an horſeman and a tumbler; it is however certain that by frequently

frequently matching their breed to the horſeman, they will acquire great ſtrength and agility. This pigeon is an excellent breeder, and makes a very tender nurſe; for which purpoſe, they are frequently kept as feeders for rearing of young powters, Leghorn runts, and ſome other pigeons, who either breed ſo faſt that they cannot conveniently give their young ones due attendance, or are deſtitute of that natural fondneſs, which is the characteriſtic of this bird.

The dragoon is a lighter and ſmaller made pigeon than the horſeman, and is ſaid to be more rapid in its flight for ten or twenty miles: nevertheleſs, if the horſeman be well bred, it will always diſtance them at a greater number of miles. They ſhould be flown and trained whilſt young, in the ſame manner as the horſeman. Among the ſeveral remarkable inſtances of the celerity of the flight of this bird, there is one ſupported by undeniable teſtimony, of a dragoon, that flew from Bury St. Edmund's to London, which is ſeventy-ſix miles, in two hours and a half.

The *Tumbler* derives its name from an intuitive principle of inſtinct peculiar to its ſpecies, which is their extraordinary motions

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as they are riſing in the air, and is effected by their turning themſelves over backward, much after the ſame manner that an expert genius in tumbling performs what is called the back-ſpring. The tumbler is a very ſmall pigeon, its body is ſhort, it has a ſlim-neck, is very full breaſted, with a ſhort round head, and ſmall ſpindle beak, and the iris of the eyes are of a clear pearl colour.

Theſe pigeons, beſides their tumbling, as mentioned above, will frequently riſe to ſuch an amazing height in the air, as to be almoſt imperceptible to the keeneſt eye; and when familiarized to each other, will keep ſuch cloſe company, that a flight of a dozen may almoſt be covered with a large handkerchief. At this height, eſpecially if the weather be warm and clear, they will continue upon the wing for four or five hours upon a ſtretch; it is reported that ſome well-bred pigeons of this ſort have flown for nine hours ſucceſſively, when they have been up at their higheſt pitch: they ſeldom or never tumble but when they are beginning to riſe, or when they are coming down to pitch.

The Dutch tumbler nearly reſembles the Engliſh, only it is larger, with a bigger head,

accompanied with a circle of thin ſkin round the eye, like that of a clean dragoon, and is frequently feather-legged. It is taken notice of by ſome, that they are apt to tumble immoderately, and to loſe ground in flying, by ſinking too low amongſt the reſt of the flight, which, if true, is a very great fault, though ſome of the Engliſh breed fall into the ſame error; and it muſt be allowed that there are ſome very good of the Dutch breed, not at all inferior to the Engliſh. The genuine Engliſh tumblers are almoſt always white, blue, or black; and therefore it is ſuppoſed that thoſe with other coloured feathers, have had them introduced by a union with the Dutch, which pigeon diſplays in its plumage, a great variety of colours, as reds, yellows, duns, blues, blacks, whites, ſilvers, and, in ſhort, a delightful compoſition of all thoſe colours interſperſed with the white.

There is a ſpecies of this pigeon, known by the name of *bald-pated-tumblers*, the plumage of which conſiſts of a great variety of colours; they have a pearl eye, a clean white head, with a white flight and tail, and are reckoned very good flyers. When they are aloft in

in the air, in fine clear weather, the contraſt of the feather ſhews, if the diſtance is not too great, and they make a very pleaſing appearance though the blue ones have gained the greateſt reputation for their lofty flights. There are alſo ſome called black or blue-bearded, that is, when either of thoſe colours are ornamented with a long daſh of white, reaching from the under jaw and cheek, a little way down the throat; when this is well ſhaped, and they run clean in the flight and tail, as above deſcribed in the bald-pated ſort, they are very handſome birds.

The *Almond Tumbler*, or as it is by ſome called the *ermine tumbler*, is a very beautiful and valuable ſpecies, and derived its origin from the common tumblers, (which it nearly reſembles in ſhape and make,) by being judiciouſly matched ſo as to ſort the feather, to wit, yellows, duns, whites, blacks, black-grizzled, black-ſplaſhed, &c. but as theſe require a length of time, they are not attainable without patience and perſeverance; however, when they are brought to a tolerable degree of perfection, they are eſteemed by ſome as the greateſt curioſity in the whole tribe of pigeons.

Some of theſe birds are ſo magnificently elegant in their plumage, that the rump, tail, back, and flight, have been compared to a bed of the fineſt and beſt broken tulips, or to a piece of the beſt and higheſt poliſhed Egyptian pebble; the more they are variegated in the flight and tail, eſpecially if the ground is yellow, the greater is the value ſet upon them; for thoſe of a fine bright yellow ground have always the precedence of all other colours, it being the colour the hardeſt to acquire. To be complete in feather, the rump, back, and breaſt, muſt be variegated, and the flight not barred. There are ſome of theſe pigeons that are variouſly and curiouſly intermixed with the three colours only, as yellow, white and black, but theſe are very ſcarce. The almond-tumbler never arrives at its full beauty of feather, till it has moulted ſeveral times, and what is remarkable it increaſes in beauty every year; but in the decline of life, when it is very old, changes to a mottled, ſplaſhed, or ſome other colour.

The proprietors of the yellow and black mottled tumblers, ſhould coincide with thoſe of the almond tumbler, the plumage excepted; the former of theſe muſt have a yellow ground, and a body mottled with white, with a yellow tail

tail and flight; the latter muſt have a black ground, its body alſo mottled with white, together with a black flight and tail. Both of theſe laſt deſcribed are exceeding pretty birds, and are alſo very uſeful, eſpecially when they agree in their other properties, to occaſionally intermix with the almond. Several perſons, after rejecting the foul-feathered birds of this ſpecies, and judiciouſly coupling the beſt coloured ones together, have brought them to a great degree of perfection, and have been ſo well ſatisfied for their labours, as to continue no other but the breed of the almond-tumbler. Indeed the elegant plumage of ſome of theſe birds baffles all deſcription, and it is in vain attempting to do juſtice to their beauty.

The *Leghorn Runt* is a noble large full bodied pigeon, it is cloſe feathered, ſhort in the back, very broad cheſted, and frequently meaſures ſeven inches and a quarter in length of its legs; when he walks, he carries his tail raiſed up in the nature of a duck's, but hangs it down when he plays. He is gooſe headed and hollow eyed, with a longer neck than any other pigeon, which he carries bending after the manner of a gooſe; the eye is encircled with a thin ſkin broader than that of the Dutch tumbler, the beak

beak is very ſhort, with a ſmall wattle over its noſtril, and the upper chap projects a little over the under chap.

The Leghorn runt is a hardy bird, and breeds tolerably well, but they are bad nurſes, and ought not to be ſuffered to bring up their own young ones; therefore it is proper to ſhift their eggs under a dragoon, or ſome other tender nurſe, in the ſame manner as directed for the powter, being careful to give them a young one of ſome ſort to take off their ſoft meat, and by this method they will ſucceed very well; and what is remarkable in all the different ſpecies of runts, they increaſe in ſize, till they are three years old. The matching of them with the Spaniſh runt greatly improves the ſize of the genuine breed, which is at preſent very ſcarce, and makes them increaſe the faſter; and ſome of this ſort when brought to table have appeared as large as a pullet.

As to their plumage, they are frequently of a grizzled colour, ermined round the neck; but thoſe moſt eſteemed are either red, white, or black-mottled. This ſpecies of the runt, is of greater value than any other kind of runts, though there is a material difference in them, ſome of them being very indifferent birds, though

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natives of Leghorn. It was originally bred at Piſo, a city of Tuſcany, which is ſituated ten miles north of Leghorn, and from this laſt city imported into England.

The *Spaniſh Runt* came originally from a ſea-port town of Spain, hence the name of Spaniſh runt; it is a ſhort thick legged, flabby-fleſhed, looſe-feathered bird, with a remarkable long body; ſome of them meaſuring twenty three inches in length, from the apex of the beak, to the extreme end of the tail, and it does not carry itſelf ſo upright as the Leghorn runt. The feathers of this are ſo uncertain, and of ſuch a variety of colours, that a judgment cannot be formed of the ſort by the colour, though ſome of the beſt are reported to be of a blood-red, or mottled colour. This bird is ſo very ſhort-legged, that it frequently breaks its eggs, by ſitting too heavy on them in the neſt; to prevent which, it is not unuſual to put a pair of neat chalk or ivory eggs into the neſt, and by that means the real ones are preſerved. There is a long-legged pigeon, which nearly reſembles the Spaniſh runt, as it is ſaid to be brought from their ſettlements in the Weſt-Indies.

The *Runt of Frieſland* is a native of the Province, whoſe name it bears; it is ſomewhat

what larger than a middle ſized runt, and what is very ſingular, its feathers are all inverted, and ſtand the wrong way; and if it has any admirers, it muſt be on account of its oddity, for it makes a diſguſtful appearance: they are at preſent very ſcarce in this country.

There are ſeveral other kinds of runts, as the feather-footed runt of Smyrna; which is a middle ſized pigeon, with ſo many feathers ſprouting from the outſide of its feet, as to have the appearance of ſmall wings; ſome of theſe feathers meaſure four inches and a half in length. There is a large Roman runt, which is ſo big and unwieldy it can ſcarcely fly; alſo the common domeſtic runts, which always compoſe that medley of pigeons, kept on purpoſe for the table, and are ſo very common in inn-yards and other places; theſe laſt ſort are good feeders, and make very uſeful nurſes for the better ſort of pigeons.

The *Trumpeter* is nearly as big as a middle-ſized runt, and very like it in ſhape and make; its legs and feet are covered with feathers, the crown of its head is very round, like that of the finnikin and nun, only it is larger, and the larger the head is, the more it is eſteemed; it is in general pearl-eyed, and black-mottled as to its

its feather; but the ſureſt mark to diſtinguiſh a good trumpeter, is the tuft of feathers which ſprouts from the root of the beak, and the larger this tuft grows, the greater is the value ſet upon the bird. The more ſalacious it is the more it will trumpet: it derives its name from its imitating the ſound of a trumpet after playing, which it always does in the ſpring of the year, when that genial ſeaſon returns, which gives as it were new life and vigour to the whole creation; thoſe who are fond of hearing it trumpet at other times, feed it very high with hemp-ſeed, which always has the deſired effect.

The *Spot*. From whence this pigeon derived its origin is uncertain, but it was firſt imported into this country from Holland; it has its name from a ſpot, juſt above its beak, upon the top of its head; the tail feathers are for the moſt part of the ſame colour with the ſpot, but the body is generally all white. The tail and ſpot in ſome of theſe birds are either yellow, red, or black; there are ſome blue, but theſe are rare; they make an exceeding pretty appearance when they ſpread their tails to fly, and what is remarkable in this ſpecies, they always breed their young ones of the ſame colour with themſelves.

The *Laughter* is a native of Paleſtine in Aſia, and was brought into Europe by the ſhips which trade to and from Turkey. This bird, in ſhape and make, very much reſembles a middle ſized runt; its plumage is generally red-mottled, but ſometimes it is blue, and it has a very bright clear pearl eye, inclining to a white. When the cock ſeeks for and begins to lack the hen, he has a kind of rough coo, like the bubbling of water poured from a jug, and then makes a rattling noiſe, very much like a gentle convulſive laugh, and from this the bird derives its name.

The *Nun* is a ſmall pigeon, and has a pleaſing contraſt in its feathers; the plumage is ſo remarkable that its head is almoſt covered with a veil of feathers, which gives it the name of the nun. Its body is chiefly all white, its head, tail, and the ſix flight feathers of its wings entirely red, yellow, or black; and agreeable to this they are called either red-headed, yellow-headed, or black-headed nuns. The nun ſhould have a pearl eye, with a ſmall head and beak, its head ſhould be covered with a hood of white feathers, riſing from the back part of the head, and the larger this tuft or hood is, the handſomer is the appearance of the bird.

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The *Helmet* is ſomething larger than the nun; the head, tail, and flight feathers of the wings, for the moſt part, preſerve an uniformity of colour, either yellow, red, blue, or black, but all the reſt of its body is generally white, ſo that the moſt material difference between it and the nun is, the former has no hood on the back part of the head, and is frequently gravel-eyed. They receive the name of helmets from their heads being ornamented with a tuft of fine ſoft feathers, which are always of a different colour from the body, and from its faint reſemblance to that ancient piece of armour formerly worn as a covering for the head.

The *Jacobine* is uſually called for ſhortneſs, the Jack; it is a very pretty bird, but the genuine breed is greatly degenerated by intermixing them with the ruff, with a view of improving the chain by the length of the ruff's feathers; but by this ill-judged practice, the chain is greatly detrimented; the bird bred larger, is much flimſier in its hood and chain, with an additional length of beak; in a word, it is worſted in all its original properties; for the real jack is one of the ſmalleſt pigeons, and the leſs they are, the more they are valued: it has a range of inverted feathers on the back part

of its head, which turns towards the neck, like the cap or cowl of a monk, from whence it derives its name of jacobine; the religious of that order wearing cowls or caps, joined to their garments for the covering of their bald pates. Therefore the upper part of this feathered covering is called the hood, and the more compact and close this feathered ornament grows to the head of the bird, so much the more does it enhance its value amongst the curious. The Dutch stile the lower part of this range of feathers, the cravat, but with us it is called the chain. The feathers which compose this chain should be long and thick, so that by laying hold of the bill, and giving the neck a gentle stretch, the two sides should lap over each other; but such real good ones are very scarce in this country. Though this breed has been much neglected with us, the Dutch and French breed them to great perfection. We are told that not long since an eminent naturalist purchased six pair of these pigeons at Rotterdam, and transmitted them to England, with a view of establishing the true breed in his native country, but his design was unfortunately frustrated by a merciless cat, who accidentally got into the loft where they were kept, and destroyed them all,

all, to the great regret of all thoſe who are curious in the breed.

The real jacobine is poſſeſſed of a very ſmall head, with a ſhort ſpindle beak, and clear pearl eye, and the leſs theſe properties are, the better. As to its plumage, there are yellows, reds, mottled, blues, and blacks; though the yellow coloured birds always claim the precedence, yet of whatever colour, they muſt always have a white tail and flight, and a clean white head; the legs and feet of ſome of theſe birds are covered with feathers, others are naked and without any, but this is of no ſignification, as each ſort has its admirers.

There is ſo great a ſimilarity, both in ſhape and make, between the ruff and the jacobine, that the one has been frequently ſold for the other, but the ruff has a longer beak, and larger head, it is alſo rather a larger pigeon; the irides of its eyes are in ſome of a gravel, in others of a pearl colour; the chain does not flow ſo near to the ſhoulders of its wings, though both the hood and chain are longer, but are nothing near ſo cloſe and compact as the jacobines, and are eaſily diſturbed with every puff of wind; they likewiſe fall more backward off the head, in a rumpled diſcompoſed form,

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and from this the pigeon receives its name. The plumage of this bird is alſo ſo ſimilar with that of the jacobine, that it is not at all ſurpriſing it ſhould frequently have been miſtaken; but by attending to the above deſcription, they may eaſily be diſtinguiſhed.

The *Turbit* is by ſome ſuppoſed to derive its name from a corruption of the word cortbeck, or curtbeke, as it is called by the Dutch, which word ſeems to be originally derived from the French, court-bec, and ſignifies a ſhort bill, for which this pigeon is remarkable. It is a ſmall pigeon, very little bigger than a jacobine; it has a round button head, and a ſhort beak; it has a tuft of feathers growing from the breaſt, which opens and ſpreads both ways, ſprouting out like the chitterlin of a ſhirt: this is called the purle, it has alſo a gullet which reaches from the beak to the purle; this bird is admired according to the largeneſs of its purle. As to the plumage, there are yellows, duns, reds, blues, blacks, and ſome that are chequered; the back of its wings and the tail ſhould be of one entire colour, the yellow and coloured ones excepted, whoſe tails muſt be white; and there ought to be bars of black acroſs the wings of the blue coloured

coloured ones; but the reſt of the body ought to be white. They are very genteel, airy pigeons, and make very good flyers, if properly trained when young. There are ſome of this ſpecies which are of one uniform colour, being all black, blue, or white.

The *Owl* has a mild, pleaſant, inſinuating aſpect, is rather leſs than a jacobine, with a gravel eye, and a very ſhort hooked beak, much reſembling that of an owl, and from which this pigeon derives its name. The purle in this bird is rather larger, and opens and expands itſelf more like a roſe, than that of the turbits; but in every other reſpect, both in ſhape, make, and plumage, this bird is very like the turbit, the beak excepted. Particular care ought to be taken, that the breeding places where theſe birds ſit, are made dark and private, for they are naturally ſo very wild and timid, that the leaſt noiſe affrights them, and when diſturbed, will fly off their eggs.

The *Capuchin*, like the jacobine, receives its name from an order of bare-headed monaſtics: it has a longer beak than the jacobine, and is ſomewhat larger in its body; it has no chain, but a very pretty hood, and is in plumage and other properties the ſame as the jacobine.

cobine. Some poſitively aſſert it to be a diſtinct ſpecies, while others as confidently affirm it to be a baſtard breed, between a jacobine and ſome other pigeon; however it is beyond a doubt, that a jacobine and another pigeon will breed a bird ſo exactly ſimilar to what is called the capuchin, as will greatly embarraſs thoſe of this firſt perſuaſion to diſtinguiſh between it, and what they term their ſeparate ſpecies.

The *Finnikin*, in make, ſhape, and ſize, differs very little from the common runt; it has a gravel eye, with a tuft of feathers growing on the back part of its crown, which falls down its neck, hanging like a horſe's mane; it has a clean leg and foot, and its plumage is always blue or black pied. This pigeon, when wanton, is addicted to very odd antics, it firſt riſes over its hen, ſpreading and flapping its wings, and turns round three or four times; it then reverſes, and turns as many times the contrary way.

The *Broad-tailed Shaker* has a frequent tremulous motion, or ſhaking in the neck, which joined to the breadth of its tail when ſpread, gives the bird the name of broad-tailed ſhaker. It is poſſeſſed of a long, taper, handſome neck, which

which it erects in a ſerpentine form, rather leaning towards its back, ſomewhat like the neck of a ſwan; it has a very ſhort beak, and is exceedingly full breaſted, with a tail compoſed of a vaſt number of feathers, very ſeldom leſs than four and twenty, and never exceeding ſix and thirty, which it ſpreads in a very ſtriking manner, like the tail of a turkey-cock, and raiſes it up to ſuch a degree, that the tail appears joined to the head, in the nature of a ſquirrel's, and from which it has received from ſome the name of fan-tails; but when it is ſo crowded with feathers, it occaſions it frequently to droop its tail, and hinders it from throwing it up to meet its head.

Though the general colour of its plumage is entirely white, there are yellow, red, blue and black pieds, and ſome all blue; but the whites are the favourite birds, as they have by far the nobleſt carriage, both in their tail and head. There is another kind of broad-tail ſhakers, which differ in nothing from the above-deſcribed bird, the neck excepted, which is ſhorter and thicker.

The *Barb* is a native of Barbary in Africa, and receives its names from the country from

whence it came. It is in ſize rather larger than a jacobine has a ſhort thick beak like a bull-finch, encruſted with a ſmall wattle, and a naked circle of a thick ſpungy red ſkin round about its eyes, like that of the carrier; when the feathers of the pinion are inclinable to a dark colour, the iris of its eyes are of a pearl colour, but when the pinion feathers are white, the iris are red, as is obſervable in ſome other birds; the redder in colour, and the wider the circle of tuberous fleſh round the eye ſpreads, the greater is the value ſet upon the bird, though this circle is very narrow as firſt, and does not arrive at its full ſize, till the bird is four years old. Some of this ſpecies are ornamented with a pretty tuft of feathers, ſprouting from the pack part of the crown of its head, reſembling that of the finnikin, but others there are without any. The plumage of the original barb, is either dun or black, for though there are pieds of both theſe colours, they are ſuppoſed to be bred from a barb and a mahomet.

The *Mahomet* was long conſidered by ſome of the moſt curious in the breed of pigeons, to be in reality only a white barb, which colour gave the red tuberous circle round its eyes

eyes a very fine effect; but ſome modern breeders give a different account, and deſcribe the bird in the following manner:

The pigeon, named Mahomet, is of a fine cream colour, with black bars acroſs its wings; its feathers are very remarkable; for though the outſide, or ſurface of them, is of a cream, yet the underſide, or that part next the body is of dark ſooty colour, as is alſo its ſkin and flue feathers, which is peculiar to this pigeon; it is about the ſize of a turbit, and inſtead of a frill, has a fine gullet, with a handſome ſeam of feathers; it has a thick, ſhort made head, with an orange coloured eye, encompaſſed with a ſmall naked circle of black fleſh; its beak has ſmall black wattle on it, and is ſhort and thick, like that of the bull-finch. This pigeon is ſaid to take its name from the following ſtory:

Mahomet, the prophetic impoſtor, and firſt propagator of the Turkiſh perſuaſion, and author of the Alcoran, or book of laws by which it is governed, is reported by ſeveral authors, and amongſt thoſe ſome of undeniable veracity, as Grotius, Scaliger, and Sionita, to have made uſe of the following artful ſtratagem, to deceive the credulous and unthinking

Arabians into a belief that he had frequent conferences with the Holy Spirit, and received from him his miſſion as a prophet, and the new doctrines he was about to propagate. This piece of deceit he carried on in the following manner, which joined to the victories he obtained, made his religion be embraced by all ranks of people. He procured a beautiful young pigeon, of this ſpecies, which, from the extraordinary whiteneſs of its plumage, was no degrading ſymbol of purity and the celeſtial dove. This bird he brought up by hand, making it ſo very tame and familiar, that he taught it to take its food out of his ear, which might eaſily be brought to paſs, till at length the pigeon frequently flew upon his ſhoulder, putting its beak into his ear in ſearch of its food. This bird he impoſed upon the Arabians as the viſible appearance of the Holy Ghoſt, whiſpering the dictates of the Almighty, and teaching him the precepts of his new laws.

The *Lace Pigeon* is in great plenty in ſome parts of Holland, where it was originally bred; it is about the ſize of a common runt, and not unlike it in make and ſhape, but the colour of its plumage is always white; it differs in the make of its feathers from all other pigeons, whoſe

whoſe plumage is compoſed of a cloſe ſmooth feather; but the web or fibres of the feather in this bird, appear quite unconnected with each other, and as it were diſunited throughout its whole plumage; in ſhort, the make of its feather is very peculiar, and gives the bird a pretty, though ſingular appearance, and from hence it derives its name of lace pigeon.

The *Frill-back*, like the laſt deſcribed, is remarkable only for the peculiar turn of its feathers, all of which look as if they had been diſtinctly and purpoſely raiſed at the end with a ſmall round pointed inſtrument, after ſuch a manner as to make a ſmall hollow in each of them. It is in ſize leſs than the common runt, though very much like it in ſhape; and its plumage is always white.

The *Smiter*, in ſhape, make, and diverſity of plumage, nearly reſembles the tumbler, the ſize excepted, it being a much larger bird. The ſmiter, is ſuppoſed to be the ſame ſpecies that the Dutch call the drager; when it flies, it has a peculiar tremulous motion with its wings, and commonly riſes in a circular manner, the male, for the generality, flying much higher than the female, and though it does not tumble, it has a particular manner of flapping its wings, with

with which it makes ſo loud a noiſe as to be heard at a great diſtance, which is frequently the cauſe of its ſhattering or breaking its quill-feathers.

The *Nincombar pigeon*, is ſomething larger than the common dove-houſe pigeon, and has a long, dark, aſh-coloured bill, the iris of the eyes red; the head black, adorned with a gloſſy blue. The neck beautified with curious long feathers of various colours; ſome of them hanging down lower than the breaſt, of a red, blue, and purple, intermixed with a gold colour, and ſhaded with a fine green; the back of the bird is all covered with broad feathers of the ſame mixture and colours; the three firſt quill-feathers of the wings, and the three laſt rows of coverts blue, the ſcapular feathers, green; the reſt of the coverts and quills of a brown duſky-coloured red; the breaſt, belly, and thighs, pretty much of the ſame colour, the feet and legs of a dirty yellow, the foreſides, covered with a ſort of brown ſcales; the tail is white. They are found in the iſlands of Nincombar, near Pegu in India, where they feed upon rice in the huſk, and live wild in the woods, making the ſame cooing noiſe as the Engliſh queeſt, or wood pigeon.

The

The *Chineſe pigeon*, with which we ſhall conclude our deſcription of this genus, is a beautiful little bird; it is a native of Pekin in China, and was imported into Europe in ſome of the Company's ſhips; it is in ſize rather leſs than the common ſwallow; the ſides of the head are yellow, but the top and the ſpace round the eyes are of an aſh-colour; it has a bluiſh aſh-coloured beak, and the irides of its eyes are of a fine white; the extreme feathers on each ſide the head and neck are red, and there are blue feathers about the riſe of its wings. The hind part of the neck and back are brown: and the extremities of the feathers black; thoſe on the ſhoulders are lighter, and variegated at the ends with black and white. The firſt and laſt covert feathers are black, but are white on their external edges; the long feathers of the wings are black, the edges of which are tipped with white; and the belly and breaſt are of a lovely pale roſe colour. The tail, which is compoſed of twelve feathers, is a mixture of duſky and bright; the legs and feet are red, and the claws black.

In the whole race of pigeons it is extremely difficult to decide with a certainty between the cock and hen; in general, however, the cock may

may be diſtinguiſhed by the following particulars.

Firſt, the cock has almoſt always a longer and ſtouter breaſt-bone than the hen. Secondly, his head and cheeks are broader and fuller, and he has a bolder look.

In young pigeons, that which ſqueaks longeſt in the neſt, generally proves to be a hen; and where there are two in the neſt, the largeſt uſually turns out to be a cock. The coo alſo of the cock is longer, louder, and more maſculine than the hen's, and the cock often makes a half round in his playing, which the hen ſeldom does, though a warm lively hen will ſometimes ſhew, and play very like a cock.

It has already been obſerved, that pigeons are very conſtant when once mated to each other, except in times of long illneſs, death, or old age; yet it is ſometimes attended with difficulty to couple fancy birds to their liking.

In order to effect this, two coops ſhould be built cloſe together, with a ſlight partition between them, ſo contrived that the birds may ſee each other, and feed out of the ſame veſſels; being well ſupplied with hemp-ſeed, they will ſoon become wanton, and when the hen begins to ſweep her tail and ſhew to the cock, as he plays

in

in the adjoining pen, you may then remove her to his, and they will ſoon agree. When this convenience is wanting, and they are at firſt both put into one coop, it is very neceſſary to but the cock in the firſt, for three or four days, that he may get maſter of the coop, or elſe they will quarrel ſo much as to end in an irreconcileable hatred ever after. But when the cock is once maſter of his houſe, he will always maintain it, and by a ſtout and well-timed reſiſtance, make his miſtreſs yield to his authority.

The common dove-houſe pigeon, being removed, as it were, but one ſtep from a ſtate of nature, is hardy, and will ſeek its own food, living upon almoſt any grain; yet it is far different with the fancy birds who are much more delicate, and always uſed to tender treatment; therefore ſome ſhort obſervations on their food is very neceſſary.

The pigeon is a granivorous bird, and may be fed with various ſorts of grain, as wheat barley, oats, peas, horſe-beans, vetches, tares, rape and canary, or hemp-ſeed. But of all grains, old tares prove to be the beſt ſuited to the nature of theſe birds; for new tares ſhould be given very ſparingly, eſpecially to young pigeons, as they are very liable to put them

into a ſcouring, though old tares will have the ſame effect, if by any accident they have been mixed with ſalt, or damaged by ſea-water; for though pigeons are very fond of ſalt, too much is very pernicious; for example, if they are ſupplied with ſea-water inſtead of freſh, it will ſoon kill them.

Horſe-beans are eſteemed the next beſt food but the ſmaller they are the better; there is a French ſort called ſmall ticks, which make good food, and are cheaper than tares, but there are two unfavourable circumſtances attend theſe: Firſt they are hard of digeſtion, and not proper diet for pigeons who have young ones to feed. Secondly, they are improper for young pigeons, for ſome time after they have begun to feed themſelves, as they are apt to ſtick in the gullet and choak them; indeed they are dangerous for any pigeon whoſe gullet is ſmall, which is the caſe with moſt of them which are long necked. No kind of beans are fit diet for Dutch croppers, or any other large cropped pigeons, as they are apt to make them gorge.

Wheat, barley, oats, and peas, ought only to be given now and then for a change of diet, as they are very ſubject to ſcour them. Rape and canary, and hemp-ſeed, is a diet that pi-

geons

geons are immoderately fond of, but this, for many ſubſtantial reaſons, muſt not by any means be made a a conſtant diet.

Pigeons are ſubject to a variety of diſorders, which together with the proper remedies, has been moſt ingeniouſly treated on by a Mr. Moore, who, to great ſkill, from his fondneſs of breeding them, had the advantage of long practice, and who, therefore, in this inſtance we ſhall invariably follow. The firſt diſeaſe he mentions is the corruption of the egg in the uterus; which uſually ariſes from the over ſalaciouſneſs of an unmatched hen, and principally proceeds from high feeding, who will often breed eggs without any connection with the male though they ſeldom bring them to perfection, and ſometimes do not bring them forth, ſo that they decay in the womb: there is no remedy for this but a low diet, if it is evident the diſorder aroſe from high feeding, and to match her to a cock in time.

For the wet droop, it is good to give them three or four pepper corns, once in three or four days, and ſteep a handful of green rue in their water, and as this is very wholeſome, you may let all the other pigeons drink of it.

The dry roop is uſually known by a dry huſky cough, that always attends it, and is ſuppoſed to proceed from a cold, to which they are very ſubject, particularly during the time of moulting: to remedy this, give them every day three or four cloves of garlic.

Thn canker uſually takes its riſe from the cocks pecking and fighting one another: tho' ſome ſay, that giving them water in a metal or a tin veſſel, will bring on this diſorder. For this, rubbing the affected part every day with burnt allum and honey will be found a good remedy; but when this has not the deſired effect, diſſolve five grains of Roman vitriol into half a ſpoonful of wine vinegar, mix it with the former medicine, and anoint the part affected. Some people ſtrip off the ſcurf and make it bleed, before they apply the remedy, but this medicine is ſufficiently ſearching without that being done.

When the fleſh, or wattles, round the eyes of the carrier, horſeman, or barb, are torn and pecked, bathe them with ſtale urine for ſeveral days; if this does not prove ſucceſsful, diſſolve two drachms of allum in one ounce and a half of water, and waſh the aggrieved part; but when

when the caſe is very obſtinate, mix half an ounce of honey with twenty grains of red precipitate, and anoint the part, and it will certainly cure it.

Pigeons are infeſted with ſmall inſects called lice, particularly during the ſummer months; when this happens, ſmoaking their feathers well with ſmoak of tobacco, will be found a certain remedy.

There is another kind of ſmall vermin, which are very pernicious, and frequently prove fatal to the young ones in the neſt, eſpecially when firſt hatched, by creeping into their ears; to prevent this, ſprinkle the duſt of tobacco in the neſt, and alſo over the young pigeons, and it will kill theſe vermin: they are called the blacks by ſome, and by others, pigeon bugs.

Gizzard-fallen, is when the gizzard ſinks down to the vent; this is generally thought to proceed from weakneſs, though it is poſſibly cauſed by feeding them on too much hemp-ſeed. There is no cure for this malady, unleſs nature will co-operate with an alteration of diet, which in young pigeons it ſometimes does.

Navel-fallen, is when there is a ſort of a bag hanging down near the vent. This diſtemper is frequently deſperate, and is only to be cured by

by giving them clary, or ſome other ſtrengthening things of a ſimilar nature.

Some pigeons, as powters, and croppers, are apt to overcharge or gorge themſelves, that as, when they have faſted rather longer than uſual, they will eat ſuch a quantity that they cannot digeſt it, but it will ſtay and corrupt in the crop, and be the death of the pigeon; when this happens, put the gorged bird in a tight ſtocking, with its feet downward, ſtroaking up the crop, that the overloaded bag of meat may not hang down: then hang up the ſtocking on a nail, keeping it in this poſture, only ſupplying it with a little water now and then, till the food is digeſted, and by this method they will frequently be ſaved, but when taken out of the ſtocking, it muſt be put in a coop or open baſket, and fed very moderately, for if left to itſelf it will gorge again. When this method does not ſucceed, ſlit the crop from the bottom with a ſharp pair of ſciſſars or penknife, take out the corrupted meat, waſh the crop and ſew it up again. This method has often proved ſucceſsful, though the crop will loſe its roundneſs: ſome take off the crop by ligature, that is, tying the part of the crop that contains the undigeſted food, tight round with

with a ſtring, and let it remain till it drops off. This method never fails, but the ſhape of the crop is entirely ruined for ever after.

The vertigo, or as it is commonly called the megrims, is a diſeaſe in which the pigeon flutters about at random, with its head reverted in ſuch a manner, that its beak reſts upon its back. This malady is pronounced incurable by moſt, and if it baffles the power of the following remedy it is ſo; infuſe in half a pint of water, one ounce and a half of ſpirit of lavender, and a drachm of the ſprit of ſal ammoniac that has been diſtilled with quick lime; in the courſe of a day force down the bird's throat about a ſpoonful and a half of this compoſition, and if the bird finds benefit, repeat the medicine every third or fourth day, only leſſening the quantity, and in the intermediate days give it a clove or garlic, or three or four pepper corns; if after a trial no amendment is ſhortly perceived, no hopes of its recovery can be entertained.

When pigeons do not moult freely, or are at a ſtand in their moulting, ſo that they do not throw their feathers kindly, it is a never-failing ſign of a bad ſtate of health: to amend this, the following method will be of ſervice; put them into

into ſome warm place, and pull out their tail feathers, mixing a good quantity of hemp-ſeed with their common food; alſo a little clary or ſaffron thrown into their water, though ſome prefer cochineal, or elder-berries for this uſe. Pigeons are alſo liable to a ſcouring, particularly in moulting time, which makes them very weak, faint, and thin: as a remedy for this, give them pump-water with a lump of chalk in it, or force the quantity of two horſe-beans down their throats every day; if this fails, pour ſome ſmith's forge water down their throat which is very binding. The grit that remains in the trough under a grind-ſtone, where they grind edge tools, is very good for a ſcouring, but muſt be uſed in very ſmall quantities, it being of a very coſtive nature.

The diſtemper called the ſmall pox, which breaks out in eruptions or puſtules full of yellow matter, on their bodies, wings, and legs, is cured by opening the puſtules, and applying burnt allum and honey, or touching them with Roman vitriol.

When pigeons are ſick, heavy, or droop their wings, give them once a day, a couple of ſpiders rolled up in butter, and if you think it ſafe to venture them, let them fly.

When

When pigeons are lame, or the ball of their foot ſwelled, either from cold, the being cut with glaſs, or any other accident, ſpread ſome Venice turpentine on a piece of brown paper, put it to the part affected, and it will heal in a few days.

The fleſh-wen, is a fleſhy tumor, which ariſes on the joints of the legs or wings: this may be either opened or cut off; if opened, take out the kernel, and waſh it with alum and water; if cut off, the part may be afterwards healed with almoſt any ſalve.

The bone-wen is a hard tumor, growing upon the joints as the laſt; this is very rarely cured, and the bird affected with it will not breed: ſome attempt to cure it with a mixture of black ſoap and quick lime: but if this is ſuffered to lie on too long, or made too ſtrong, it will eat off the leg, or any other part where it is applied, it being a ſtrong cauſtic.

The core. This malady is ſo called, from its reſemblance to the core of an apple; it is hard, and uſually of a yellow colour interſperſed with red, and is moſtly ſeated in the anus or vent.—This muſt be ripened; to effect which, keep the pigeon looſe, by giving it a gentle purge of tobacco, a ſmall quantity will do; this will

ſometimes make them diſcharge the core themſelves, if not, when ripe it muſt be drawn out.

The birds, particularly the common ſort, are frequently afflicted with ſcabs on the back and breaſt, which makes the old ones ſo weak that they cannot fly abroad in ſearch of food, and abſolutely kill the young ones; the following recipe is recommended as a cure. A pound of dill-ſeed, a pound of fennel-ſeed, and the ſame quantity of cummin-ſeed, an ounce and a half of aſſa-fœtida, a quarter of a pound of bay-ſalt, and of common ſalt the ſame quantity. Mix all theſe ingredients with ſome fine clean clay, together with a ſmall quantity of flour. This being prepared, bake it in two pots, and ſet it on a ſtand in the pigeon-houſe, and the birds will continue to pick it till they are cured.

The dalliance practiſed by this bird during the time of courtſhip, is both peculiar and engaging. The cock when ſalacious, will by a voice at that time exceedingly ſweet and pleaſing, and by ſeveral endearing and pretty geſtures, woo the female, and endeavour to gain her affections; ſhe, when complying, ſoon diſcovers it by her motions, as ſpreading her wings, nodding her head,

head, and ſweeping her tail; from hence they proceed to billing, that is, the hen puts her beak into the cock's, who appears as if feeding her; after this they ſeek for a neſt, or ſome convenient place to depoſit their eggs, into which they will carry ſuch neceſſaries as beſt ſuits their purpoſe; ſome making a good neſt, others hardly any.

When the hen is near the time of her laying, the cock will follow her from place to place, not allowing her to be at peace any where but in her neſt. And ſome cocks are ſo very intent, that at this time, they will hardly permit a hen to eat, which will make her very weak, and frequently cauſe her to lay an imperfect or thin-ſhelled egg.

Though pigeons make a general increaſe in a year, it does not ariſe from any quantity of eggs they lay at one time, for they never lay more than two, and directly proceed to incubation, but from the frequency of the hatchings, which if they are good breeders, uſually happens once in five or ſix weeks. After a pigeon has laid her firſt egg, ſhe reſts a day between, and on the following day lays another: it is cuſtomary for them to ſtand over the firſt egg, which is termed irregular incubation, till

the ſecond is laid, and then ſit cloſe, that both young ones may be hatched nearly at once: though ſome will ſit cloſe on the firſt, and by that means bring one young one or two days ſooner than the other. During the time of a pigeon's incubation, the trouble is equally divided between the cock and hen, as has already been obſerved. But at the end of nineteen days if the eggs are not hatched, they ſhould be examined, and if addled taken away, as their continuing to ſit longer, does not only cauſe a delay in their further propagation, but does great injury to the bird.

THE LAND RAIL

WEIGHS about ſix or ſeven ounces, and is from the point of each wing, when extended, about nineteen or twenty inches. The bill is about an inch long, and very much reſembles that of a water-hen; the under mandible is of a duſky colour, the upper more whitiſh. The body of this bird is narrow, and ſeems compreſſed on each ſide; the chin, breaſt, and lower part of the belly are white, upon the head are two broad black lines, it has alſo a white line that paſſes from the ſhoulders reſembling that of a moor-hen; the throat is of a ſort of brown or dirty colour. The middle of the feathers on the back are black, but the ſides are rather reddiſh or aſh-coloured, it has tranſverſe white lines, running acroſs the thighs. Some of the wing-feathers, eſpecially the leſſer rows, are of a deep yellow; the tail is about

two

two inches long, the legs are bare of feathers above the knees, the feet of a whitiſh colour. It has a ſtalking gait, and is by the Italians called the great quail, or the king of quails, and is ſaid to be the leader or guide of thoſe birds, from one place to another. They are ſaid to feed upon ſnails, worms, and all kinds of ſmall inſects.

They are but rarely ſeen in England, but are very common in many parts of Ireland.

THE ATTAGEN

HAS a ſhort black bill, hooked, and ſharp at the end. The body is of various colours. The head is quite beautiful, and adorned with a fine tuft, or top-knot, of a browniſh colour, chequered with black and white ſpots. It has black eyes, with a brown circle, and the ſkin of the eye-lid is ſcarlet. The throat, or underneath the bill, is covered with ſome very fine longiſh feathers, which hang down in the manner of a beard. It has a long neck, which, like the reſt of the body, is ſlender and taper, of an aſh-colour, and diverſified with white and black ſpots. The foremoſt claws of the feet are pretty long, but the hindermoſt, are ſhorter, and all of them are provided with ſharp crooked talons.

What was the true attagen of the ancients is not very well agreed among authors. Alexander Myndius

Myndius deſcribes it to be a little larger than a partridge, to be full of ſpots of different colours down the back; of a reddiſh brown with ſhort wings, and a plump heavy body. But Geſner takes it to have been the *Gallina Corylorum*, or mountain partridge. Bellonius thinks it was of the quail kind; and Julius Alexandrinus relates, that he ſaw one that was brought from Spain, that had a longer neck and legs, and was not ſpotted in the ſame manner. One was ſeen at Florence, with a black bill, but reddiſh at the end; black eyes, with an aſh-coloured circle; ſpotted with white on the belly; of a reddiſh brown colour on the back, chequered with black ſpots; and with dark brown feet. Aldrovandus ſays, that a bird was brought from the mountains in Sicily, and affirmed to be the true attagen, which in bigneſs, and almoſt every other particular, exactly reſembled a pheaſant; their fleſh is of a delicious taſte.

They are reported to purge themſelves with henbane; for which reaſon, it is ſaid, none are to be ſeen in countries which want that plant. They are found in ſome parts of Crete, and in Cyprus are bred tame. But none can compare in goodneſs with thoſe of Rhodes and Ionia. They are likewiſe to be met with in the

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FIG. 69.

Brown Heron.

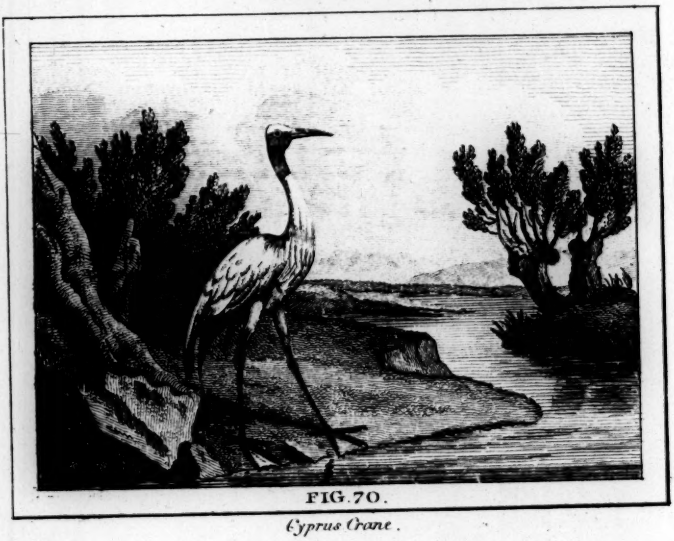

FIG. 70.

Cyprus Crane.

the Pyrenean mountains on the ſide of Spain, in Auvergne, in France, and on the Alps.

They feed on all ſorts of grain and fruits; and will call over their own name, as well as their voice will permit, and ſing. But as Pliny and Ælian inform us, they loſe their voice when taken; and what is equally remarkable, recover it again as ſoon as ſet at liberty.

OF THE HERON, CRANE, STORK, AND THEIR AFFINITIES.

WE ſhall now proceed to a moſt extenſive family of the feathered race, who both in ſhape, habits, and manners, differ moſt materially from any of the tribes of which we have hitherto treated. In this, as well as the other tribes, nomenclators have taken much pains and trouble to put them into regular claſſes, but in doing of which, in our opinion, the moſt arbitrary diſtributions have been adopted, and the moſt

evident blunders been perſiſted in. For inſtance, we ſhall find the humming bird and the raven placed in the ſame family; and here it is hardly neceſſary to put the interrogatory, "What idea the European could form of the beautiful little animal who wantons in the ſolar beams, and whoſe ſplendor adorns the Aſiatic ſcenes, if he was told it belongs to the ſame claſs as yonder carrion crow?" The ſame kind of palpable contradictions have been variouſly perſiſted in through every tribe, and in none more ſo than in thoſe who come under the general denomination of the Water-fowl. Mr. Pennant, however, has made a diſtinction which we ſhall be inclined to follow in our arrangement of them; he divides them into three orders, thoſe with cloven feet, as the crane kind; thoſe with finned feet, as the ſnipe kind; and thoſe with webbed feet, as the duck kind; this diviſion, indeed, has ſome claims to be obſerved as correct, ſince thoſe belonging to each part, have general and diſtinct properties; for inſtance, the waders, or cloven-footed water fowls, are in general tall, light, and though with long tails and necks, yet well proportioned; while the web-footed are of a ſquat make, with a waddling gait:

their

their legs placed far behind, and the length of their necks out of all proportion. Thoſe with finned feet conſtitute, as it were, a middle race, being calculated both for ſwimming and wading, and partake of the nature of both. The cloven-footed lay their eggs on the ground, and make no neſts. Thoſe with pinnated feet form large neſts in the water or near it; and the web-footed fowl depoſit their eggs ſometimes on lofty cliffs, or inacceſſible promontories, or elſe concealed in the ruſhes, buſhes, &c. near the water. Of the general characteriſtics of this ſpecies a celebrated author has thus ably obſerved: "The pro-" greſſions of Nature from one claſs of beings to " another are always by ſlow and almoſt imper-" ceptible degrees. She has peopled the woods " and the fields with a variety of the moſt beauti-" ful birds; and, to leave no part of her extenſive " territories untenanted, ſhe has ſtocked the " waters with its feathered inhabitants alſo; ſhe " has taken the ſame care in providing for the " wants of her animals in this element, as ſhe " has done with reſpect to thoſe of the other: " ſhe has uſed as much precaution to render " water-fowl fit for ſwimming, as ſhe did in " forming land-fowl for flight; ſhe has de-" fended their feathers with a natural oil, and

" united their toes by a webbed membrane ;
" by which contrivances they have at once ſe-
" curity and motion. But between the claſſes
" of land-birds that ſhun the water, and of
" water-fowl that are made for ſwimming and
" living on it, ſhe has formed a very numerous
" tribe of birds, that ſeem to partake of a mid-
" dle nature; that, with divided toes, ſeem-
" ingly fitted to live upon land, are at the ſame
" time furniſhed with appetites that chiefly at-
" tach them to the waters. Theſe can pro-
" perly be called neither land-birds nor water-
" fowl, as they provide all their ſuſtenance
" from watery places, and yet are unqualified
" to ſeek it in thoſe depths where it is often
" found in greateſt plenty.

" This claſs of birds, of the crane kind, are
" to be diſtinguiſhed from others rather by
" their appetites than their conformation. Yet
" even in this reſpect they ſeem to be ſuffici-
" ently diſcriminated by nature ; as they are to
" live among the waters, yet are incapable of
" ſwimming in them, moſt of them have long
" legs, fitted for wading in ſhallow waters, or
" long bills proper for groping in them.

" Every bird of this kind, habituated to
" marſhy places, may be known, if not by the

" length

" length of its legs, at leaſt by the ſcaly ſur-
" face of them. Thoſe who have obſerved the
" legs of a ſnipe or a woodcock, will eaſily
" perceive my meaning; and how different the
" ſurface of the ſkin that covers them is from
" that of the pigeon or the partridge. Moſt
" birds of this kind alſo, are bare of feathers
" half way up the thigh; at leaſt, in all of them,
" above the knee. Their long habits of wad-
" ing in the waters, and having their legs con-
" tinually in moiſture, prevent the growth of
" feathers on thoſe parts; ſo that there is a
" ſurpriſing difference between the leg of a
" crane, naked of feathers, almoſt up to the
" body, and the falcon, booted almoſt to the
" very toes.

" The bill alſo is very diſtinguiſhable in moſt
" of this claſs. It is, in general, longer than
" that of other birds, and in ſome finely fluted
" on every ſide; while at the point it is poſ-
" ſeſſed of extreme ſenſibility, and furniſhed
" with nerves, for the better feeling their food
" at the bottom of marſhes, where it cannot
" be ſeen. Some birds of this claſs are thus
" fitted with every convenience: they have
" long legs, for wading; long necks, for
" ſtooping; long bills, for ſearching; and

" nervous

" nervous claws, for feeling. Others are not " ſo amply provided for; as ſome have long " bills, but legs of no great length; and others " nave long necks, but very ſhort legs. It is " a rule which univerſally holds, that where " the bird's legs are long, the neck is alſo long " in proportion. It would indeed be an in- " curable defect in the bird's conformation, to " be lifted upon ſtilts above its food, without " being furniſhed with an inſtrument to reach " it.

" If we conſider the natural power of this " claſs, in a comparative view, they will ſeem " rather inferior to thoſe of every other tribe. " Their neſts are more ſimple than thoſe of " the ſparrow; and their methods of obtaining " food leſs ingenious than thoſe of the falcon; " the pie exceeds them in cunning; and " though they have all the voracioufneſs of the " poultry tribe, they want their fecundity.— " None of this kind, therefore, have been ta- " ken into man's ſociety, or under his pro- " tection; they are neither caged, like the " nightingale; nor kept tame, like the tur- " key; but lead a life of precarious liberty, " in fens and marſhes, at the edges of lakes, " and along the ſea ſhore. They all live upon

" fiſh

" fiſh or inſects, one or two only excepted;
" even thoſe that are called *mudſuckers*, ſuch
" as the ſnipe and the woodcock, it is more
" than probable, grope the bottom of marſhy
" places only for ſuch inſects as are depoſited
" there by their kind, and live in a vermicular
" ſtate, in pools and plaſhes, till they take wing,
" and become flying inſects.

" All this claſs, therefore, that are fed upon
" inſects, their food being eaſily digeſtible, are
" good to be eaten; while thoſe who live en-
" tirely upon fiſh, abounding in oil, acquire
" in their fleſh the rancidity of their diet, and
" are, in general, unfit for our tables. To ſa-
" vages, indeed, and ſailors on a long voyage,
" every thing that has life ſeems good to be
" eaten; and we often find them recommend-
" ing thoſe animals as dainties, which they
" themſelves would ſpurn at, after a courſe of
" good living. Nothing is more common in
" their journals than ſuch accounts as theſe."
'This day we ſhot a fox—pretty good eating:
'this day we ſhot a heron—pretty good eating:
'and this day we killed a turtle—which they
'rank with the heron and the fox—as pretty
'good eating.' " Their accounts, therefore,
" of the fleſh of theſe birds, are not to be de-

" pended

" pended upon; and when they cry up the " heron or the ſtork of other countries as " luxurious food, we muſt always attend to " the ſtate of their appetites, who give the " character."

Such are the general obſervations made upon this race, and which are applicable to almoſt the whole, notwithſtanding it is divided into ſuch numerous branches. It is true, indeed, that if we ſimply look upon the heron and the ſwan, we ſhall be led, by their figures, to determine that no two birds can be more oppoſite; in ſome of their manners and habits they are alſo very different, particularly as the one is in the conſtant practice of ſailing on the boſom of the air, while the other is as invariably ſwimming on the water; but they nevertheleſs poſſeſs ſufficient ſimilar characteriſtics to induce us follow the general cuſtom of ranking them all in one extenſive family.

THE HERON.

THE *Crane*, *Stork*, and *Heron*, together with all their varieties, bear a very ſtrong affinity to each other; and their differences are not eaſily diſcernable. The crane and ſtork differ rather in their nature and internal conformation than in their external figure; but ſtill they may be diſtinguiſhed as well by their colour as by the claws of the ſtork, which are very peculiar, and more reſembling a man's nails than the claws of a bird. The heron may be diſtinguiſhed from both, by its ſize, which is much leſs and by its bill, which is much longer in proportion; and alſo more particularly the middle claw on each foot, which is toothed like a ſaw, for the better ſeizing and holding its ſlippery prey. The heron differs alſo from all of the feathered race, by hav-

ing but one cœcum, whereas other birds have two.

Briſſon has enumerated no leſs than forty-ſeven varieties of the heron, and Latham has extended them to eighty two, all differing in their ſize, figure, and plumage, and with talents adapted to their place of reſidence, or their peculiar purſuits. But, how various ſoever the heron kind may be in their colours or their bills, they all ſeem poſſeſſed of the ſame manners, and have but one character of cowardice and rapacity, indolence, yet inſatiable hunger. Other birds, ſay all naturaliſts, are found to grow fat by an abundant ſupply of food; but theſe, though exceſſively deſtructive and voracious, are ever found to have lean and carrion bodies, as if not even plenty were ſufficient for their ſupport.

The common heron is remarkably light, in proportion to its bulk, ſcarce weighing three pounds and an half, yet it expands a breadth of wing which is five feet from tip to tip. Its bill is very long, being five inches from the point to the baſe; its claws are long, ſharp, and the middlemoſt toothed like a ſaw. Yet, thus armed, as it appears for war, it is indolent and cowardly, and even flies at the approach of

of a ſparrow-hawk. Goldſmith obſerves, that it was once the amuſement of the great to purſue this timorous creature with the falcon; and heron hawking was ſo favourite a diverſion among our anceſtors, that laws were enacted for the preſervation of the ſpecies; and the perſon who deſtroyed their eggs was liable to a penalty of twenty ſhillings for each offence. At preſent, however, the defects of the ill-judged policy of our anceſters is felt by their poſterity; for, as the amuſement of hawking has given place to the more uſeful methods of ſtocking fiſh ponds, the heron is now become a moſt formidable enemy.

Of all other birds, this commits the greateſt devaſtation in freſh-waters: and there is ſcarce a fiſh, though ever ſo large, that he will not ſtrike at and wound, though unable to carry it away. But the ſmaller fry are his chief ſubſiſtence; theſe, purſued by their large fellows of the deep, are obliged to take refuge in ſhallow waters, where they find the heron a ſtill more formidable enemy. His method is to wade as far as he can go into the water, and there patiently wait the approach of his prey, which when it comes within ſight, he darts upon with inevitable aim. In this manner he is found to

deſtroy more in a week than an otter in three months. "I have ſeen an heron," ſays Wil-"loughby, "that had been ſhot, that had ſe-"venteen carp in his belly at once, which he "will digeſt in ſix or ſeven hours, and then to "fiſhing again. I have ſeen a carp," continues he, "taken out of an heron's belly, nine "inches and a half long. Several Gentlemen "who kept tame herons, to try what quantity "one of them would eat in a day, have put "ſeveral ſmaller roach and dace in a tub; and "they have found him eat fifty in a day, one "day with another. In this manner a ſingle "heron will deſtroy fifteen thouſand carp in a "ſingle half year."

In general the heron may be ſeen taking his gloomy ſtand by the lake ſide, as if meditating miſchief, motionleſs and gorged with plunder. His uſual attitude on this occaſion is to ſink his long neck between his ſhoulders, and keep his head turned on one ſide, as if eying the pool more intently. When the call of hunger returns, the toil of an hour or two is commonly ſufficient to fill his capacious ſtomach; and he retires long before night to his retreat in the woods. Early in the morning, however, he is ſeen aſſiduous at his uſual occupation.

In

In ſeaſons of fine weather, the heron can always find a plentiful ſupply, but in cold and ſtormy ſeaſons, his prey is no longer within reach; the fiſh that in the firſt caſe come into the ſhallow water, then keep in the deep as they find it to be the warmeſt ſituation. Frogs and lizards alſo ſeldom venture from their lurking places; and the heron is obliged to ſupport himſelf upon his long habits of patience, and even to take up with the weeds that grow upon the water. At thoſe times he contracts a conſumptive diſpoſition, which ſucceeding plenty, is not able to remove; ſo that the meagre glutton ſpends his time between want and riot, and feels alternately the extremes of famine and exceſs. Hence, notwithſtanding the care with which he takes his prey, and the amazing quantity he devours, the heron is alway lean and emaciated; and though his crop be uſually found full, yet his fleſh is ſcarce ſufficient to cover the bones.

Though the heron uſually takes his prey by wading into the water, yet he ſometimes takes it upon the wing. Much of his fiſhing indeed is performed in this manner; but he never hovers over deep waters, as there his prey is enabled to eſcape him by ſinking to the bottom.

In

In ſhallow places he darts with more certainty; for though the fiſh at ſight of its enemy inſtantly deſcends, yet the heron, with his long bill and legs, inſtantly pins it to the bottom, and thus ſeizes it ſecurely. In this manner, after having been ſeen with its long neck for above a minute under water, he riſes upon the wing, with a trout or an eel ſtruggling in his bill to get free. The greedy bird, however, flies to the ſhore, ſcarce gives it time to expire, but ſwallows it whole, and then returns to fiſhing as before.

As this bird does incredible miſchief to ponds newly ſtocked, Willoughby has ſuggeſted a method for taking him. "Having found his "haunt, get three or four ſmall roach or dace, "and having provided a ſtrong hook with a "wire to it, this is drawn juſt within ſide the "ſhin of the fiſh, beginning without ſide the "gills, and running it to the tail, by which "the fiſh will not be killed, but continue for "five or ſix days alive. Then having a ſtrong "line made of ſilk and wire, about two yards "and an half long, it is tied to a ſtone at "one end, the fiſh with the hook being ſuf-"fered to ſwim about at the other. This be-"ing properly diſpoſed in ſhallow water, the

"heron

" heron will ſeize upon the fiſh to its own de-
" ſtruction. From this method we may learn
" that the fiſh muſt be alive, otherwiſe the he-
" ron will not touch them, and that this bird,
" as well as all thoſe that feed upon fiſh, muſt
" be its own caterer; for they will not prey
" upon ſuch as die naturally, or are killed by
" others before them."

Though this bird lives chiefly among pools and marſhes, yet its neſt is built on the tops of the higheſt trees, and ſometimes on cliffs hanging over the ſea. They are never in flocks when they fiſh, committing their depredations in ſolitude and ſilence; but in making their neſts they love each other's ſociety; and they are ſeen, like rooks, building in company with flocks of their kind. Their neſts are made of ſticks, and lined with wool; and the female lays four large eggs of a pale green colour. The obſervable indolence of their nature, however, is not leſs ſeen in their neſtling than in their habits of depredation. Nothing is more certain, than that they will not be at the trouble of building a neſt when they can get one made by the rook, or deſerted by the owl, already provided for them. This they uſually enlarge and line within, driving off the origi-

nal

and poſſeſſors ſhould they happen to renew their claims.

The French avail themſelves of the indolence of this bird, and provide a place with materials fitted for their neſtlings, which they call *heronries* The heron, though conſidered by the Engliſh as unfit for the table, is ſought for in France, where the fleſh of the young ones is in particular eſtimation. It is therefore for the purpoſe of procuring them with more eaſe, that they raiſe up high ſheds along ſome filthy ſtream; and furniſhing them with materials, the herons neſtle, build, and breed there in great abundance. As ſoon as the young ones are ſuppoſed to be fit, the owner of the heronry takes, and carries off ſuch as are proper for eating; and theſe are ſold for a very good price to the neighbouring gentry. "Theſe "are a delicacy which, M. Buffon ſays, the "French are very fond of, but which ſtran-"gers have not yet been taught to reliſh as "they ought." Nevertheleſs it was formerly eſteemed as a food in England, and made a favourite diſh at great tables. It was then ſaid that the fleſh of a heron was a diſh for a king; at preſent, nothing about the houſe will touch it but a cat.

The

The herons, therefore, not being conſidered as worth the trouble of purſuing upon any account whatever, are ſeldom ſought after or diſturbed in their retreats, which, excepting when in ſearch after prey, are commonly in almoſt inacceſſible heights. Their neſts are often found in great numbers in the middle of large foreſts, and in ſome groves nearer home, where the owners have a predilection for the bird, and do not chuſe to drive it from its accuſtomed habitations. It is certain that by their cries, their expanſive wings, their bulk, and wavy motion, they add no ſmall variety to the foreſt, and ſolemnity to the ſcene.

When the young are excluded, as they are numerous, voracious, and importunate, the old ones are for ever upon the wing to provide them with ſuſtenance. The quantity of fiſh they take upon this occaſion is amazing, and their ſize is not leſs to be wondered at. Of their aſſiduity in providing for their young, an inſtance is given of a heron's neſt that was built near a ſchool-houſe, to which ſome of the boys climbed up, took down the young ones, ſewed up the vent, and laid them in the neſt as before. The pain the poor little animals felt from the operation increaſed their cries; and this but

ſerved to increaſe the diligence of the old ones in enlarging their ſupply. Thus they heaped the neſt with various ſorts of fiſh and the beſt of their kind; and as their young ſcreamed they flew off for more. The boys gathered up the fiſh, which the young ones were incapable of eating, till the old ones at laſt quitted their neſt, and gave up their brood, whoſe cravings they found it impoſſible to ſatisfy.

The heron is ſaid to be a very long-lived bird; by Mr. Keyſler's account it may exceed ſixty years; and by a recent inſtance of one that was taken in Holland, by an hawk belonging to the Stadtholder, its longevity is again confirmed, the bird having a ſilver plate faſtened to one leg, with an inſcription, importing, that it had been ſtruck by the Elector of Cologne's hawks thirty-five years before.

That which is called the *Brown Heron* has the upper part of the head neck, and back, and alſo the ſides of the wings, of a dark aſh-colour; the ſcapular feathers have generally white tips with a ſort of black ſtroke on each ſide of the wings, the quill-feathers of a more dark colour, very much inclining to black, except the extreme edges, which are white; the breaſt, neck, and upper part of the belly, are of a pale white,

ſprinkled

ſprinkled with black; the lower part of the belly darkiſh aſh, and the thighs of a yellowiſh caſt; the tail is a dark aſh, and the extreme feathers ſix or ſeven inches long.

The *Blue Heron* is about the ſize of the common one, is ſuppoſed to weigh upwards of three pounds, and is about a yard from the tip of the bill to the end of the toes; the bill is in ſize and colour, much the ſame of the former, only the upper part is a little hooked at the point. It has a fine creſt of feathers on the top of the head, which appears of a bluiſh ſky colour; the ſide of the head from the bill and under part of the eyes are white, the covert and ſcapular feathers of the wings are of a pale blue, the quill-feathers black, with their outmoſt edges blue; the reſt of the body is of a bluiſh ſort of lead colour, it has yellowiſh feet, with very long toes, the middle claw cerated. This is a curious and very uncommon bird.

The *Soco*, a Braſilian bird, ſeems in every reſpect, to reſemble the heron. It is about the ſize of the leſſer heron, and has a ſhort tail; the feathers on the head and neck are of a browniſh colour, ſprinkled with black ſpots; as are alſo thoſe on the belly; but thoſe under the wings are varied black and white.

John Leo, in his African hiſtory, gives an account of a fowl which, by his deſcription, very much reſembles this, only its bill, neck, and legs are ſomewhat ſhorter; in flying up, he ſays, it mounts out of ſight, but deſcends with a jirk when it ſpies a dead carcaſe; it lives very long; nay, many of this kind live till age bereaves them of all their feathers, upon which they return to their neſt, and are nouriſhed by the younger birds. They neſtle upon high rocks, and the tops of unfrequented mountains, eſpecially upon mount Atlas, where thoſe who are acquainted with ſuch places come and take them. The Italians have taken it for a bird of prey, but this author ſeems of another mind.

THE BITTERN.

SOLEMN and dreary as, in an evening, may appear the various notes of the ſecluded inhabitants of the banks of the unfrequented rivers, whether we conſider the loud ſcream of the wild gooſe, the croaking of the mallard, the whining of the lapwing, or the tremulous neighing of the jack ſnipe, there is none ſo diſmally hollow as the booming of the bittern. It is impoſſible for words to give thoſe who have not heard this evening call an adequate idea of its ſolemnity. It is like the interrupted bellowing of a bull, but more hollow and louder, and is heard at a mile's diſtance, as if iſſued from ſome formidable being that reſided at the bottom of the waters.

The bird, however, that produces this terrifying ſound is not ſo big as an heron, with a weaker

weaker bill, and not above four inches long. It differs from the heron chiefly in its colour, which is in general of a paliſh yellow, ſpotted and barred with black. Its wind-pipe is fitted to produce the ſound for which it is remarkable; the lower part of it, dividing into the lungs, is ſupplied with a thin looſe membrane, that can be filled with a large body of air, and exploded at pleaſure. Theſe bellowing exploſions are chiefly heard from the beginning of ſpring to the end of autumn; and, however awful they may ſeem to us, are the calls to courtſhip, or connubial felicity.

This bird, though of the heron kind, is yet neither ſo deſtructive nor ſo voracious. It is a retired, timorous animal, concealing itſelf in the midſt of reeds and marſhy places, and living upon frogs, inſects, and vegetables; and though ſo nearly reſembling the heron in figure, yet differing much in manners and appetites. It lays its eggs in a ſedgy margin, or amidſt a tuft of ruſhes, and compoſes its ſimple habitation of ſedges, the leaves of water plants, and dry ruſhes. It lays generally ſeven or eight eggs of an aſh-green colour, and in three days leads its little ones to their food.

The

The fleſh of the bittern is greatly in eſteem among the luxurious. For this reaſon it is as eagerly ſought after by the fowler as it is ſhunned by the peaſant; and as it is a heavy riſing, ſlow-winged bird, it does not often eſcape him. Indeed, it ſeldom riſes but when almoſt trod upon; and ſeems to ſeek protection rather from concealment than flight. At the latter end of autumn, however, in the evening, its wonted indolence appears to forſake it. It is then ſeen riſing in a ſpiral aſcent till it is quite loſt from the view, and makes, at the ſame time, a ſingular noiſe very different from its former boomings.

The heron is lean and cadaverous, ſubſiſting chiefly upon animal food; the bittern is plump and fleſhy, as it feeds upon vegetables, when more nouriſhing food is wanting. It cannot be therefore, from its voracious appetites, but its hollow boom, that the bittern is held in ſuch deteſtation by the common people, many of whom entertain the opinion that it makes uſe of ſome external inſtrument to produce ſo tremendous a ſound, and poſitively aſſert that the bird thruſts its bill into a reed that ſerves as a pipe for ſwelling the note above its natural pitch; while others, and in this number we find

find Thomſon, the poet, imagine that the bittern puts its head under water, and then violently blowing produces its boomings: but the fact is, that the bird, as already obſerved, is ſufficiently provided by nature for this call; and is often heard where there are neither reeds nor waters to aſſiſt its ſonorous invitations. By whatever cauſe the booming is made, it has been the means of rendering the bittern a terror to the peaſant, and enabled him frequently to put a whole hamlet into a lamentable conſternation. "I remember, ſays a modern author, in the "place where I was a boy with what terror "this bird's note affected the whole village; "they conſidered it as the preſage of ſome bad "event; and generally found or made one to "ſucceed it. I do not ſpeak ludicrouſly: but "if any perſon in the neighbourhood died, they "ſuppoſed it could not be otherwiſe, for the "night-raven had foretold it; but if nobody "happened to die, the death of a cow, or a "ſheep, gave completion to the prophecy."

THE CRANE.

AUTHORS differ very much with reſpect to the ſize and dimenſions of this bird. Willoughby and Pennant ſtate him to be from five to ſix feet long, from the tip of the tail to the beak. Other accounts ſay, that he is above five feet high; and others, that he is as tall as a man; but it is very difficult to ſuppoſe that a bird, the body of which is not larger than that of a turkey hen, and acknowledged on all hands not to weigh above ten pounds, can be almoſt as long as an oſtrich. Briſſon, however, ſeems to give this bird its real dimenſions, when he deſcribes it as ſomething leſs than the brown ſtork, about three feet high, and about four from the tip to the tail. Still, however, the numerous teſtimonies of its ſuperior ſize are not to be totally rejected; and perhaps, that from which Briſſon took his dimenſions, was one of the ſmalleſt of the kind.

According to Briſſon then, the crane meaſures three feet four inches from the tip of the beak to the end of the tail, and four feet from the head to the toe. It is a tall, ſlender bird, with a long neck and long legs. The top of the head is covered with black briſtles, and the back of it is bald and red, which ſufficiently diſtinguiſhes the crane from the ſtork, to which it is very nearly allied in ſize and figure. The plumage, in general, is aſh-coloured; and there are two large tufts of feathers that ſpring from the pinion of each wing. Theſe bear a reſemblance to hair, and are finely curled at the ends, which the bird has a power of erecting and depreſſing at pleaſure. Geſner ſays, that theſe feathers, in his time, uſed to be ſet in gold, and worn as ornaments in the caps of the great.

The crane is a bird with which all the ancient writers are familiar; and, in deſcribing it, they have not failed to mix fable with hiſtory. From the policy of the cranes, ſay they, we may draw an idea of the moſt perfect republic amongſt ourſelves; from their tenderneſs to their decrepid parents, which they take care to nouriſh, to cheriſh, and ſupport when flying, we may learn leſſons of filial piety; and from

from their conduct in fighting with the pigmies of Ethiopia, we may imbibe the moſt uſeful maxims in the art of war. In early times, the hiſtory of Nature fell to the lot of poets, and though certainly none could then deſcribe it ſo well, yet it was a part of their province to embelliſh alſo; therefore, when this agreeable ſcience was firſt undertaken by the hiſtoric naturaliſt, he was obliged to take many accounts as he found them; and thus it was that, in a variety of inſtances, fable has ran down blended with truth to poſterity.

In the ſurpriſing peculiarities, therefore, which have been attributed to the crane, there is ſome foundation of truth; yet much more has been added by fancy. The crane is certainly a very ſocial bird, for they are ſeldom ſeen alone. Their uſual method of flying or ſitting, is in flocks of fifty or ſixty together; and while a part feed, the reſt ſtand like centinels upon duty.

The various fables of their ſupporting their aged parents, may have ariſen from their ſtrict connubial affection; and as for their fighting with the pigmies, it may not be improbable but that they have boldly withſtood the invaſions of monkeys coming to rob their

neſts; for, in this caſe, as the crane lives upon vegetables, it is not probable that it would be the firſt aggreſſor.

However this be, the crane is a wandering ſociable bird, that, for the moſt part, ſubſiſts upon vegetable; and is known in every country of Europe, except our own. There is no part of the world, ſays Belonius, where the fields are cultivated, that the crane does not come in with the huſbandman for a ſhare in the harveſt. As they are birds of paſſage, they are ſeen to depart and return regularly at thoſe ſeaſons when their proviſion invites or repels them. They generally leave Europe about the latter end of autumn, and return in the beginning of ſummer. In the inland parts of the continent, they are ſeen croſſing the country in flocks of fifty or an hundred together, making from the northern regions towards the ſouth.

In theſe migrations, however, they are not ſo reſolutely bent upon going forward, but that if a field of corn offers in their way, they will ſtop awhile to regale upon it: upon ſuch occaſions they do incredible damage, chiefly in the night; and the huſbandman, who lies down in joyful expectation of a plentiful harveſt, riſes in

in the morning to ſee his fields laid entirely waſte, by an enemy, whoſe march is too ſwift for his vengeance to overtake.

England is now free from their viſits; not but that they were formerly known in this iſland, and held in great eſtimation for the delicacy of their fleſh: there was even a penalty enacted againſt deſtroying their eggs; but, at preſent they do not extend their excurſions ſo far. Cultivation and population, as we have had frequent occaſion to remark, go hand in hand; and though our fields may offer them a greater plenty, yet they are ſo guarded, that the cranes have clearly conſidered the hazard exceeded the advantage; and by which determination we are certainly benefited, for whatever their fleſh might once have been, when, as Plutarch tells us, cranes were blinded and kept in coops, to be fattened for the tables of the great in Rome; or, as they were brought up, ſtuffed with mint and rue, to the tables of our nobles at home; at preſent they are conſidered all over Europe as wretched eating. The fleſh is fibrous and dry, requiring much preparation to make it palatable; and even after every art, it is fit only for the ſtomachs of ſtrong and labouring people.

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The cold attic region ſeems to be this bird's favourite abode. They come down into the more ſouthern parts of Europe, rather as viſitants than inhabitants: yet it is not well known in what manner they portion out their time, to the different parts of the world. The migrations of the fieldfare and thruſh are obvious and well known: they go northward or ſouthward, in one ſimple track; when their food fails them here, they have but one region to go to. But it is otherwiſe with the crane; he changes place, like a wanderer: he ſpends his autumn in Europe; he then flies off, probably to ſome more ſouthern climate, to enjoy a part of the winter returns to Europe in the ſpring; croſſes up to the north in ſummer; viſits thoſe lakes that are never dry; and then comes down again, to make depredations upon our cultivated grounds, in autumn. Thus, Geſner aſſures us, that the cranes uſually begin to quit Germany, from about the eleventh of September to the ſeventeenth of October; from thence they are ſeen flying ſouthward by thouſands; and Redi tells us, they arrive in Tuſcany a ſhort time after. There they tear up the fields newly ſown, for the grain juſt committed to the ground, and do great miſchief. It is to be

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ſuppoſed that, in the ſeverity of winter, they go ſouthward, ſtill nearer the line. They again appear in the fields of Piſa, regularly about the twentieth of February to anticipate the ſpring.

When they ſet out on theſe journies, they aſcend to amazing heights, and ſo continue during their flight. Their note is the loudeſt of all other birds; and is often heard deſcending from the clouds, when the bird itſelf is entirely unſeen. As it is light for its ſize, and ſpreads a large expanſe of wing, it is capable of floating at the greateſt height, where the air is ligheſt; and as it ſecures its ſafety, and is entirely out of the reach of man, it flies in tracks which it would be too fatiguing for any other bird to move forward in.

Though unſeen themſelves in theſe aerial journeys, they are ſuppoſed to have the moſt diſtinct viſion of every object below. They govern and direct their flight by their cries; and exhort each other to proceed or to deſcend, when a fit opportunity offers for depredation. Their voice, as we obſerved, is the loudeſt of all the feathered tribe; and its peculiar clangor ariſes from the very extraordinary length and contortion of the windpipe. In quadrupeds, the

the windpipe is ſhort, and the glottis, or cartilages that form the voice, are at that end of it which is next the mouth: in water-fowl, the windpipe is longer, but the cartilages that form the voice at the other end, which lies down to their belly. By this means they have much louder voices, in proportion to their ſize, than any other animal whatever; for the note, when formed below, is reverberated through all the rings of the windpipe, till it reaches the air.—But the voice of the duck or the gooſe, is nothing to be compared to that of the crane, whoſe windpipe is not only made in the ſame manner with theirs, but is above twenty times as long. Nature ſeems to have beſtowed much pains in lengthening out this organ. From the outſide, it enters through the fleſh into the breaſt-bone, which hath a great cavity within to receive it. There, being thrice reflected, it goes out again at the ſame hole, and ſo turns down to the lungs, and thus enters the body a ſecond time. The loud clangorous ſound which the bird is thus enabled to produce is, when near, almoſt deafening. It is, however, particularly ſerviceable to the animal, either during their migrations, or while they remain in the ſame place: by it the flock is encouraged

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in their journies; and if, while they are feeding, which is uſually performed in profound ſilence, they are invaded on any ſide, the bird that firſt perceives the danger, is ſure to ſound the alarm, and all are ſpeedily upon the wing.

As they riſe but heavily, they are very ſhy birds, and ſeldom let the fowler approach them. Their depredations are generally made in the darkeſt nights; at which time they enter into a field of corn, and trample it down, as if it had been croſſed over by a regiment of ſoldiers. On other occaſions, they croſs ſome extenſive ſolitary marſh, where they range themſelves all day, as if they were in deliberation; and not having that grain which is moſt to their appetites, wade the marſhes, for inſects and other food, which they can procure with leſs danger.

Corn is their favourite food: but there is ſcarce any other that comes amiſs to them.—Redi, who opened ſeveral, found the ſtomach of one full of the herb called *dandelion*; that of another was filled with beans; a third had a great quantity of clover in its ſtomach; while that of two others was filled with earth-worms and beetles; in ſome he found lizards and ſea-fiſh; in others, ſnails, graſs, and pebbles, ſwallowed perhaps for medicinal purpoſes. From

which it plainly appears that theſe birds can be at no loſs to obtain a neceſſary ſupply, although corn-fields may be their moſt favourite ſcenes of plunder.

In general it is a peaceable bird, both in its own ſociety, and with reſpect to thoſe of the foreſt. Though ſo large in appearance, a ſmall falcon will purſue, attack, and often diſable it. The method is, with thoſe who are fond of hawking, to fly ſeveral hawks together againſt it; which the crane endeavours to avoid, by flying up perpendicularly, till the air becomes too thin to ſupport it any higher. The hawk, however ſtill bears it company; and though leſs fitted for floating in ſo thin a medium, yet, poſſeſſed of greater rapidity, it ſtill gains the aſcendency. They both often riſe out of ſight; but ſoon the ſpectator, who keeps his eye fixed above, perceives them like two ſpecks, beginning to appear: they gather on his eye for a little ſpace, and ſhortly after come tumbling perpendicularly together, with great animoſity, on the ſide of the hawk, and a loud ſcreaming on that of the crane. Thus driven to extremity, and unable to fly, the poor animal throws itſelf upon its back, and in that ſituation, makes a moſt deſperate defence, till the ſportſman coming

ing up, generally puts an end to the conteſt with its life.

It was once the cuſtom to breed up cranes to be thus baited; and young ones were taken from the neſt, to be trained up for this cruel diverſion. It is an animal eaſily tamed; and if we can believe Albertus Magnus, has a particular affection for man. This quality, however, was not ſufficient to guard it from being made the victim of his fierce amuſements. The female is eaſily diſtinguiſhed from the male, by not being bald behind, ſhe never lays above two eggs at a time, and which are like thoſe of a gooſe, but of a bluiſh colour. The young ones are ſoon fit to fly, and then the parents forſake them to ſhift for themſelves: but, before this time, they are led forth to the places where their food is moſt eaſily found. Tho' then unfledged, they run with ſuch ſwiftneſs that a man cannot eaſily overtake them. We are told that as they grow old, their plumage becomes darker; and, as a proof of their longevity, Aldrovandus aſſerts that a friend of his kept one tame for above forty years.

Whatever may have been the diſpoſition of the great, the common people of every country, to this day, bear the crane a compaſſionate

regard. It is poſſible the ancient prejudices in its favour, which once having been planted are eradicated but ſlowly, may ſtill continue to operate. In ſome countries, it is conſidered as an heinous offence to kill a crane; and though the legiſlature declines to puniſh, yet the people do not fail to reſent the injury. The crane, they, in ſome meaſure, conſider as the prophet of the ſeaſon: upon its approach or delay they regulate the periods of their rural economy. If he comes early in the ſeaſon they expect a plentiful ſummer; and if ſlow in his viſits, they then prepare for an unfavourable harveſt.

The *Egret* is of the crane kind, but only one ſpecies is known in Europe, which is called the *little egret*. It is the ſize of a fowl. The hind head is creſted, and two of the feathers, which are five inches in length, hang gracefully behind. The whole plumage is of a beautiful white, and the elegance of the bird is much increaſed by the long, looſe feathers which cover and hang over the rump; their fleſh is ſaid to be excellent. It is conjectured that both the crane and egret were formerly inhabitants of Great Britain; but this can hardly be ſaid of them at preſent, notwithſtanding a ſolitary

tary inſtance or two of their having been ſhot there. In America there are egrets found of a black colour; but they differ in no other reſpect from the European.

THE STORK.

CONSIDERING the Stork merely as to its external figure, we ſhould be very apt to confound it with the crane; for it is of the ſame ſize; it has the ſame formation as to the bill, neck, legs, and body, except that it is ſomething more corpulent. Its differences are but very ſlight; ſuch as the colour, which in the crane is aſh and black, but in the ſtork is white and brown. The nails of the toes of the ſtork alſo are very peculiar; not being clawed like thoſe of other birds, but flat like the nails of a man.

Theſe, however, are but very ſlight differences; and its true diſtinctions are to be taken rather from its manners than its form. The crane has a loud piercing voice; the ſtork is ſilent,

ſilent, and produces no other noiſe than the clacking of its under chap againſt the upper: the crane has a ſtrange convolution of the windpipe through the breaſt bone; the ſtork's is formed in the uſual manner: the crane feeds moſtly upon vegetables and grain, the ſtork preys entirely upon frogs, fiſhes, birds, and ſerpents: the crane avoids towns and populous places; the ſtork always lives in or near them: the crane lays but two eggs, and the ſtork generally four. Theſe are diſtinctions fully ſufficient to mark the ſpecies, notwithſtanding the ſimilitude of their form.

Storks are birds of paſſage, like the former; but it is hard to ſay whence they come or whither they go. When they withdraw from Europe, they all aſſemble on a particular day, and never leave one of their company behind them. They take their flight in the night; which is the reaſon the way they go has never been obſerved. They generally return into Europe in the middle of March, and make their neſts on the tops of chimnies and houſes as well as of high trees. The females lay from two to four eggs, of the ſize and colour of thoſe of geeſe; and the male and female ſit upon them by turns. They are a month in hatching; and when their young

young are excluded, they are particularly ſolicitous for their ſafety.

As the food of theſe birds conſiſts in a great meaſure of frogs and ſerpents, it is not to be wondered at that different nations have paid them a particular veneration. The Dutch are very ſolicitous for the preſervation of the ſtork in every part of their republic. This bird ſeems to have taken refuge among their towns; and builds on the tops of their houſes without any moleſtation. There it is ſeen reſting familiarly in the ſtreets, and protected as well by the laws as the prejudices of the people. They have even got an opinion that it will only live in a republic: and that ſtory of its filial piety, firſt falſely propagated of the crane, has in part been aſcribed to the ſtork. But it is not in republics alone that the ſtork is ſeen to reſide, as there are few towns on the continent, in low marſhy ſituations, but have the ſtork as an inmate among them; whether under the deſpotic princes of Germany, or the republics of Italy.

The ſtork ſeems a general favourite even among the moderns; but with the ancient Egyptians their regard was carried even to adoration. This enlightened people, who worſhipped the Deity in his creatures, paid divine

honours

honours to the ibis, as is univerſally known. It has been uſually ſuppoſed that the ancient ibis is the ſame with that which goes at preſent by the ſame name; a bird of the ſtork kind, of about the ſize of a curlew, all over black, with a bill very thick in the beginning; but ending in a point for the better ſeizing its prey, which is catterpillars, locuſts, and ſerpents. But, however uſeful the modern ibis may be in ridding Egypt, where it reſides, of the vermin and venomous animals that infeſt it; yet it is much doubted whether this be the ſame ibis to which the ancients paid their adoration. Maillet, the French conſul at Cairo, obſerves, that it is very hard to determine what bird the ancient ibis certainly was, becauſe there are cranes, ſtorks, hawks, kites, and falcons, that are all equally enemies to ſerpents, and devour a vaſt number. He farther adds, that in the month of May, when the winds begin to blow from the internal parts of Africa, there are ſeveral ſorts of birds that come down from Upper Egypt, from whence they are driven by the rains, in ſearch of a better habitation, and that it is then they do this country ſuch ſignal ſervices. Nor does the figure of this bird, hierogliphically repreſented on their pillars, mark

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it ſufficiently to make the diſtinction. Beſides, the modern ibis is not peculiar to Egypt, as it is to be ſeen but at certain ſeaſons of the year; whereas we are informed by Pliny, that this bird was ſeen no where elſe. It is thought, therefore, that the true ibis is a bird of the vulture kind, deſcribed above, and called by ſome the *capon of Pharoah*, which not only is a devourer of ſerpents, but will follow the caravans that go to Mecca, to feed upon the offal of the animals that are killed on the journey.

Indeed, there are other authors who deſcribe the Egyptian ibis to be much larger than the ſtork, meaſuring from thirty to forty inches in length; that its bill is near ſeven inches long, ſlightly curved, and ends in a blunt point; that its plumage is of a reddiſh white, moſtly inclining to black or red on the wings and back; and thoſe authors ſtate that they are found in great number in Lower Egypt, eſpecially in thoſe places juſt freed from the inundations of the Nile, and where they are of great ſervice, by deſtroying inſects, reptiles, &c.

There is another kind, called the *Black-faced Ibis*, which does not exceed twenty-eight inches in length. The whole face of this, quite beyond the eyes, is bare of feathers, black

and warty, and under the chin hangs a looſe, wrinkled ſkin, forming a pouch. The head, neck and breaſt are yellow, with a bar of aſh-colour acroſs the latter; the reſt of the body is aſh-colour. It was found on New Year's Iſland, near Staten Iſland.

OF THE BALEARIC AND OTHER CRANES.

PLINY has deſcribed a bird of the crane-kind, with a topping reſembling that of the green wood-pecker. This bird continued unknown among the moderns until they became acquainted with the birds of the tropical climates, when one of the crane-kind with a topping was brought into Europe, and deſcribed by Aldrovandus as Pliny's Belearic Crane. Hence theſe birds, which have ſince been brought from Africa and the Eaſt in numbers, have received the name of Balearic Cranes, but without any juſt foundation. The real Balearic Crane of Pliny ſeems to be the leſſer aſh-coloured heron, with a topping of narrow white feathers, or perhaps the egret, with two long feathers that fall back from the ſides of the

head. The bird that we are about to deſcribe under the name of the Belearic Crane, was unknown to the ancients; and the heron or egret ought to be reinſtated in their juſt title to that name.

No bird preſents to the eye a more whimſical figure than this, which is univerſally called the Balearic Crane. It is pretty nearly the ſhape and ſize of the ordinary crane, with long legs and a long neck, like others of the kind; but the bill is ſhorter, and the colour of the feathers of a dark greeniſh grey. The head and throat form the moſt ſtriking part of this bird's figure. On the head is ſeen ſtanding up, a thick round creſt, made of briſtles, ſpreading every way, and reſembling rays ſtanding out in different directions. The longeſt of theſe rays are about three inches and an half; and they are all topped with a kind of black taſſels, which give them a beautiful appearance. The ſides of the head and cheeks are bare, whitiſh, and edged with red, while underneath the throat hangs a kind of bag or wattle, like that of a cock, but not divided into two. To give this odd compoſition a higher finiſhing, the eye is large and ſtaring;

the

the pupil black and big, ſurrounded with a gold-coloured iris, that completes the bird's very ſingular appearance.

From ſuch a peculiar figure, we might be led to wiſh for a minute hiſtory of its manners; but of theſe we can give but ſlight information. This bird comes from the coaſt of Africa, and the Cape de Verd Iſlands. As it runs, it ſtretches out its wings, and goes very ſwiftly, otherwiſe its uſual motion is very ſlow. In their domeſtic ſtate, they walk very deliberately among other poultry, and ſuffer themſelves to be approached by every ſpectator. They never rooſt in houſes; but about night, when they are diſpoſed to go to reſt, they ſearch out ſome high wall, on which they perch in the manner of a peacock. Indeed they ſo much reſemble that bird in manners and diſpoſition, that ſome have deſcribed them by the name of the *ſea-peacock*: and Ray has been enclined to rank them in the ſame family. But, though their voice and rooſting be ſimilar, their food, which is entirely upon greens, vegetables, and barley, ſeems to make ſome difference.

There is a ſpecies of this bird found in the ſouthern parts of Africa and India, called the *Gigantic Crane*, which frequently meaſure ſeven

ſeven feet and an half, when ſtanding erect, and from the tip of one wing to that of the other, fourteen feet ten inches. The head and neck are naked, and of a yellowiſh colour. The feathers on the back and wings are of an iron colour, thoſe of the breaſt and belly of a dirty white. The craw hangs down on the fore-part of the neck, like a pouch, and the lower part is hairy. Theſe birds are gregareous, and when their wings are ſpread, appear like a number of canoes on the ſurface of the water. They may be eaſily tamed, and become ſo familiar, that a young one at the king of the Bananas in Africa became ſo troubleſome, that the ſervants were obliged to guard the proviſions by beating it off with ſwitches; but notwithſtanding this, it commonly purloined ſomething, and one day was known to ſwallow at a mouthful a whole boiled fowl. It was accuſtomed to rooſt very high among the cotton trees, whence at two or three miles diſtance, it could ſpy the dinner carrying acroſs the yard, when darting from its ſtation, it would enter promiſcuouſly with the perſons who carried in the diſhes. It preys upon birds, reptiles, and ſmall quadrupeds. On opening one of them a land tortoiſe, ten inches long, and a large

large black cat were found entire in its ſtomach.

The *Jabiru* and the *Jabiru Guagu*, are both birds of the crane kind, and natives of Braſil; we know little of them except the general outline of their figure, and the enormous bills which are preſerved in the cabinets of the curious. The bill of the latter is red, and thirteen inches long; the bill of the former is black, and is found to be eleven. Neither of them, however, are of a ſize proportioned to their immoderate length of bill. The jabiru guacu is not above the ſize of a common ſtork, while the jabiru with the ſmalleſt bill exceeds the ſize of a ſwan. They are both covered with white feathers, except the head and neck, which are naked: and their principle difference is in the ſize of the body and the make of the bill; the lower chap of the jabiru guacu being broad, and bending upwards.

A bird ſtill more extraordinary may be added to this claſs called the *Anhima*, and, like the two former a native of Braſil. This is a water fowl of the rapacious kind, and bigger than a ſwan. The head, which is ſmall for the ſize of the body, bears a black bill, which is not above two inches long; but what diſtinguiſhes

it

it in particular is a horn growing from the forehead as long as the bill; and bending forward like that of the fabulous unicorn of the ancients. This horn is not much thicker than a crow-quill, as round as if it were turned in a lathe, and of an ivory colour. But this is not the only inſtrument of battle this formidable bird carries; it ſeems to be armed at all points; for at the fore-part of each wing, and the ſecond joint, ſpring two ſtraight triangular ſpurs, about as thick as one's little finger: the foremoſt of theſe goads or ſpurs is above an inch long; the hinder is ſhorter, and both of a duſky colour. The claws are alſo long and ſharp; the colour is black and white; and they cry terribly loud, ſounding ſomething like Vyhoo Vyhoo. They are never found alone, but always in pairs; the cock and hen prowl together; and their fidelity is ſaid to be ſuch, that when one dies, the other never departs from the carcaſe, but dies with its companion. It makes its neſt of clay, near the bodies of trees, upon the ground, of the ſhape of an oven.

Another bird of this claſs, from the peculiarity of its manners, is vulgarly called by our ſailors the *buffoon bird*, and by the French, the *demoiſelle* or *lady*. The ſame qualities have procured

FIG. 71.

Spoon Bill.

FIG. 72.

Demoiselle.

procured it theſe different appellations from two nations, who, on more occaſions than this, look upon the ſame objects in very different lights. The peculiar geſtures and contortions of this bird, the proper name of which is the *Numidian* crane, are extremely ſingular; and the French, who are ſkilled in the arts of elegant geſticulation, conſider all its motions as lady-like and graceful. Our Engliſh ſailors, however, who have not entered ſo deeply into the dancing art, think, that while thus in motion, the bird cuts but a very ridiculous figure. It ſtoops, riſes, lifts one wing, then another, turns round, ſails forward, then back again; all which highly diverts our ſeamen; not imagining, perhaps, that all theſe contortions are but the awkward expreſſion, not of the poor animal's pleaſures, but its fears.

It is a very ſcarce bird; the plumage is of a leaden grey; but it is diſtinguiſhed by fine white feathers, conſiſting of long fibres, which fall from the back of the head, about four inches long; while the fore part of the neck is adorned with black feathers, compoſed of very fine, ſoft, and long fibres, that hang down upon the ſtomach, and give the bird a very graceful appearance. The ancients have deſcribed a

buffoon bird, but there are many reaſons to believe that their's is not the Numidian crane. It comes from that country from whence it has taken its name.

The *Spoonbill*, it is true, differs a good deal from the crane, yet approaches this claſs more than any other. The body is more bulky for its height, and the bill is very differently formed from that of any other bird whatever. Yet ſtill it is a comparatively tall bird; it feeds among waters; its toes are divided; and it ſeems to poſſeſs the natural diſpoſitions of the crane. The European ſpoonbill is of about the bulk of a crane; but the latter is above four feet high, while the former is ſeldom more than three. The common colour of thoſe of Europe is a dirty white; but thoſe of America are of a beautiful roſe-colour, or a delightful crimſon. Beauty of plumage ſeems to be the prerogative of all the birds of that continent; and we here ſee the moſt ſplendid tints beſtowed on a bird, whoſe figure is ſufficient to deſtroy the effects of its colouring; for its bill is ſo oddly faſhioned, and its eyes ſo ſtupidly ſtaring, that its fine feathers only tend to add ſplendour to deformity. The bill, which in this bird is ſo very particular, is about ſeven inches long, and

and running out broad at the end, as its name juſtly ſerves to denote; it is there about an inch and a half wide. This ſtrangely-faſhioned inſtrument, in ſome is black; in others of a light grey; and in thoſe of America, it is of a red colour, like the reſt of the body. All round the upper chap there runs a kind of rim, with which it covers that beneath; and as for the reſt, its cheeks and its throat, are without feathers, and covered with a black ſkin.

A bird ſo oddly faſhioned, might be expected to poſſeſs ſome very peculiar appetites; but the ſpoonbill ſeems to lead a life entirely reſembling all thoſe of the crane kind; and Nature, when ſhe made the bill of this bird ſo very broad, ſeems rather to have ſported with its form, than to aim at any final cauſe for which to adapt it. In fact, it is but a poor philoſophy to aſcribe every capricious variety in Nature to ſome ſalutary purpoſe: in ſuch ſolutions we only impoſe upon each other, and often wilfully contradict our own belief. There muſt be imperfections in every being, as well as capacities of enjoyment. Between both, the animal leads a life of moderate felicity; in part making uſe of its many natural advantages, and in part neceſſarily conforming to the imperfections of its figure.

The ſpoonbill chiefly feeds upon frogs, toads, and ſerpents; of which, particularly at the Cape of Good Hope, they deſtroy great numbers. The inhabitants of that country hold them in as much eſteem as the ancient Egyptians did their bird ibis: it runs tamely about their houſes; and they are content with its ſociety, as an uſeful though an homely companion. They are never killed; and indeed they are good for nothing when they are dead, for the fleſh is unfit to be eaten.

This bird breeds in Europe, in company with the heron in high trees; and in a neſt formed of the ſame materials. Willoughby tells us, that in a certain grove, at a village called Seven Huys, near Leyden, they build and breed yearly in great numbers. In this grove alſo, the heron, the bittern, the cormorant, and the ſhag, have taken up their r ſidence, and annually bring forth their young together. Here the crane kind ſeems to have formed their general rendezvous; and as the inhabitants ſay, every ſort of bird has its ſeveral quarter, where none but their own tribe are permitted to reſide. Of th s grove the peaſants of the country make good profit. When the young ones are ripe, thoſe that farm the grove, with

with a hook at the end of a long pole, catch hold of the bough on which the neſt is built, and ſhake out the young ones; but ſometimes the neſt and all tumble down together.

Theſe birds lay from three to five eggs; white, and ſprinkled with a few ſanguine or pale ſpots. We ſometimes ſee in the cabinets of the curious, the bills of American ſpoon-bills, twice as big and as long as thoſe of the common kind among us; but theſe birds have not yet made their way into Europe.

Of this bird there is a very ſmall ſpecies at Surinam, and which, though perfectly agreeing both as to ſhape and manners, ſcarcely exceeds the ſize of a ſparrow.

The *Flamingo* has a juſt right to be placed among the crane ſpecies; for although it is web-footed, like birds of the gooſe kind, yet its height, figure and appetites, entirely remove it from that claſs of animals. With a longer neck and legs than any other of the crane kind, it ſeeks its food by wading among waters, and only differs from all of this tribe in the manner of ſeizing its prey; the heron makes uſe of its claws, but the flamingo uſes only its bill, which is ſtrong and thick for the purpoſe, the

claws

claws being uſeleſs, as they are feeble, and webbed.

The flamingo is the moſt remarkable of all the crane kind, being not only the talleſt, but the moſt bulky and moſt beautiful. The body, which is of a beautiful ſcarlet, is not bigger than that of a ſwan; but its legs and neck are of ſuch an extraordinary length, that when it ſtands erect, it is ſix feet ſix inches high. Its wings, extended, are five feet ſix inches from tip to tip; and it is four feet eight inches from beak to tail. The head is round and ſmall, with a large bill, ſeven inches long; partly red, partly black, and crooked like a bow. The legs and thighs, which are not much thicker than a man's finger, are about two feet eight inches high; and its neck near three feet long. The feet, as we before obſerved, are not furniſhed with ſharp claws, as in others of the crane kind, but feeble, and united by membranes, as in thoſe of the gooſe. Of what uſe theſe membranes are does not appear, as the bird is never ſeen ſwimming, its legs and thighs being of ſufficient length for wading into thoſe depths where it ſeeks for prey.

This bird was formerly found in great plenty on all the coaſts of Europe, but it is now ſeen only

only in the retired parts of America. Its beauty, ſize, and the peculiar delicacy of its fleſh, have been ſuch temptations to take or deſtroy it, that it has long ſince deſerted the ſhores frequented by man, and taken refuge in countries that are as yet but thinly peopled. In theſe ſolitary regions, the flamingo lives in a ſtate of ſociety, and ſeemingly under a better polity than any other of the feathered creation, as has frequently been obſerved by thoſe who have traverſed that extenſive continent; and who, in thoſe extenſive journies have taken repeated notice of the good order preſerved in their retreats at the approach of man, whom they then conſider as an enemy, by invading their territories, and in which they live in peace and ſecurity.

Mr. Albin, indeed tells us, that when the Europeans firſt went to America, coaſted down along the African coaſts, they found the flamingos on ſeveral ſhores on both continents, gentle, and no ways diſtruſtful of mankind.—They had long been uſed to ſecurity, in the extenſive ſolitudes they had choſen; and knew no enemies, but thoſe they could very well evade or oppoſe. The negroes and the native Americans, were poſſeſſed but of few de-

ſtructive

ſtructive arts for killing them at a diſtance; and when the bird perceived the arrow, it well knew how to avoid it. But it was otherwiſe when the Europeans firſt came among them: the ſailors, not conſidering that the dread of fire-arms was totally unknown in that part of the world, gave the flamingo the character of a fooliſh bird, that ſuffered itſelf to be approached and ſhot at. When the fowler had killed one, the reſt of the flock, far from attempting to fly, only regarded the fall of their companion in a kind of fixed aſtoniſhment: another and another ſhot was diſcharged; and thus the fowler often levelled almoſt the whole flock, before one of them began to think of eſcaping. Experience, however, taught them better; at preſent it is very different, for the flamingo is not only one of the ſcarceſt but of the ſhyeſt birds in the world, and the moſt difficult of approach. They chiefly keep near the moſt deſerted and inhoſpitable ſhores; near ſalt-water lakes and ſwampy iſlands. They come down to the banks of rivers by day; and often retire to the inland, mountainous parts of the country at the approach of night. When ſeen by mariners in the day, they always appear drawn up in a long cloſe line of two or three

three hundred together; and, as Dampier tells us, preſent, at the diſtance of half a mile, the exact repreſentation of a long brick wall.—Their rank, however, is broken when they ſeek for food; but they always appoint one of the number as a watch, whoſe only employment is to obſerve and give notice of danger, while the reſt are feeding. As ſoon as this truſty centinel perceives the remoteſt appearance of danger, he gives a loud ſcream, with a voice as ſhrill as a trumpet, and inſtantly the whole cohort are upon the wing. They feed in ſilence; but, upon this occaſion, all the flock are in one chorus, and fill the air with intolerable ſcreamings.

But notwithſtanding theſe aſſertions of Dampier, and others, that the flamingo at preſent avoids mankind with the moſt cautious timidity, it is certainly not from any antipathy to man that they ſhun his ſociety, for in ſome villages, as we are aſſured by Labat, along the coaſt of Africa, the flamingos come in great numbers to make their reſidence among the natives. There they aſſemble by thouſands, perched on the trees, within and about the villages; and are ſo very clamorous, that the ſound is heard at near a mile diſtance. The

negroes are fond of their company; and conſider their ſociety as a gift of Heaven, and a protection from accidental evils. They feed, protect, and endeavour to render them every poſſible aſſiſtance. "But, my countrymen," ſays M. de Buffon, "who are admitted to this "part of the coaſt, cannot, without ſome de- "gree of diſcontent, ſee ſuch quantities of game, "and that of the moſt delicate kind, remain "untouched, and rendered uſeleſs by the ſuper- "ſtition of the natives; they therefore take "every opportunity of killing them, when they "find themſelves unobſerved and at a conve- "nient diſtance from the villages; but they "find it very neceſſary to hide them in the long "graſs, if they perceive any of the Negroes "approaching; for they would probable ſtand "a chance of being ill-treated, if the blacks "diſcovered their ſacred birds were thus un- "mercifully treated, and deſtroyed for the pur- "poſe of indulging the appetites of their viſi- "tors."

Before they became ſo exceedingly ſhy, and even now in ſome part of Africa, they are frequently ſhot by the mariners on the coaſts, who alſo not unoften are enabled to catch their young, although they run exceedingly faſt.—

Labat

Labat ſays, that he has frequently taken them with nets, properly extended round the places they breed in. When their long legs are entangled in the meſhes, they are then unqualified to make their eſcape: but they ſtill continue to combat with their deſtroyer, and the old ones, though ſeized by the head, will ſcratch with their claws; and with which, though to every appearance inoffenſive weapons, they very often wound their enemies; and even when they are fairly diſengaged from the net, they preſerve a natural obſtinacy and ferocity; they refuſe all nouriſhment; and peck and combat with their claws at every opportunity thoſe who come near them; therefore, continues this author, there is an abſolute neceſſity for deſtroying them, when taken, as they would only pine and die, if an attempt was made to keep them in captivity. They fleſh of the old ones is black and hard; though, Dampier ſays, well taſted; but that of the young ones is much better, and eſteemed as excellent by many.—But, of all other delicacies, the flamingo's tongue is the moſt celebrated. "A diſh of "flamingos' tongues, ſays M. de Buffon, is a "feaſt for an emperor." In fact, the Roman emperors conſidered them as the higheſt luxury;

and we have an account of one of them, who procured fifteen hundred flamingos' tongues to be ſerved up in a ſingle diſh. The tongue of the flamingo, which is ſo much ſought after, is a good deal larger that that of any other bird whatever. Its bill is like a large black box, of an irregular figure, and filled with a tongue which is black and griſtly, and which has long been reckoned among the epicures, as a moſt rare delicacy, from poſſeſſing a very pleaſing and peculiar flavour. Be this as it may, we agree with a reſpectable author, who ſays— "It is probable that the beauty and ſcarcity of "the bird, might be the firſt inducements to ſtu- "dious gluttony to fix upon its tongue as meat "for the table." What Dampier ſays of the goodneſs of its fleſh, cannot ſo well be relied on; for Dampier was often in want of proviſions, and then naturally thought any thing good that could be eaten, and poſſibly might eſtimate the delicacy of any freſh food in proportion to the wants it happened to ſupply; but even he, however, agrees with Labat, that the fleſh is black, tough, and fiſhy; ſo that we can hardly give him credit, when he aſſerts, that the fleſh of the flamingo is ſo rare, that it can be formed into a luxurious entertainment.

The

The flamingos, as we have already obſerved, always go in flocks together; and when they change their ſituations, they do it in ranks in the ſame manner as the cranes. They are ſometimes ſeen, at the break of day, flying down in great numbers from the mountains; and conducting each other with a kind of trumpet cry, that ſounds like the word Tococo, from whence the ſavages of Canada have given them that name. In their flight they appear to great advantage; for they then ſeem to be of as bright a red as a burning coal. When they diſpoſe themſelves to feed, they ceaſe their cry; and then they diſperſe over a whole marſh, in ſilence and aſſiduity. Their manner of feeding is very ſingular; the bird thruſts down its head, ſo that the upper convex ſide of the bill ſhall only touch the ground; and in this poſition the animal appears, as it were, ſtanding upon its head.

In this manner it paddles and moves the bill about, and ſeizes whatever fiſh or inſect happens to offer. For this purpoſe the upper chap is notched at the edges, ſo as to hold its prey with the greater ſecurity. Cateſby, however, gives a different account of their feeding; he

he ſays that they thus place the upper chap undermoſt, and ſo work about, in order to pick up a ſeed, from the bottom of the water, that reſembles millet: but as in picking up this, they neceſſarily alſo ſuck in a great quantity of mud, their bill is toothed at the edges, in ſuch a manner as to let out the mud, while they ſwallow the grain.

Their time of breeding is according to the climate in which they reſide: in North America they breed in our ſummer; on the other ſide the line they take the moſt favourable ſeaſon of the year. They build their neſts in extenſive marſhes, and where they are in no danger of a ſurpriſe. The neſt is not leſs curious than the animal that builds it: it is raiſed from the ſurface of the pool about a foot and a half, formed of mud, ſcraped up together, and hardened by the ſun, or the heat of the bird's body: it reſembles a truncated cone, or one of the pots which we ſee placed on chimnies; on the top it is hollowed out to the ſhape of the bird, and in that cavity the female lays her eggs, without any lining but the well cemented mud that forms the ſides of the building. She always lays two eggs, and no more; and, as her legs are immoderately long, ſhe ſtraddles on the neſt, while

while her legs hang down, one on each ſide into the water.

The young ones are a long while before they are able to fly; but they very ſoon run with amazing ſwiftneſs. They are ſometimes caught; and, very different from the old ones, ſuffer themſelves to be carried home, and are tamed very eaſily. In five or ſix days they become ſo familiar as to eat out of the hand; they drink a ſurpriſing quantity of ſea-water, and of which it is neceſſary to give them plenty. But though they are eaſily rendered domeſtic, they are not reared without the greateſt difficulty; for they generally pine away, for want of their natural ſupplies, and moſtly die in a ſhort time. While they are yet young, their colours are very different from thoſe lively tints they acquire with age. In their firſt year they are covered with plumage of a white colour, mixed with grey; in the ſecond year the whole body is white with here and there a ſlight tint of ſcarlet; and the great covert feathers of the wings are black: the third year the bird acquires all its beauty; the plumage of the whole body is ſcarlet, except ſome of the feathers in the wings, that ſtill retain their ſable hue. Of

theſe

theſe beautiful plumes, the ſavages make various ornaments; and they were formerly tranſported into Europe for the purpoſe of making muffs, but are at preſent almoſt in diſuſe, and preſerved only as ornaments by the curious.

END OF THE SECOND VOLUME.

20 MA 69